VISIT…

The Delirium of Praise

Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, Klossowski

Eleanor Kaufman

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The Delirium of Praise

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The Delirium of Praise

Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, Klossowski

Eleanor Kaufman

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To Marvin Kaufman

Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"
"My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many."

—Mark 5:9

Contents

	Acknowledgments	*xi*
1	Introduction: *Noli me legere* (Don't read me)	1
2	Chattering Silences: Bataille and Blanchot on Louis-René des Forêts's *Le Bavard*	18
3	"O My Friends, There Is No Friend": Blanchot, Foucault, and Derrida	37
4	Madness and Repetition: The Absence of Work in Deleuze, Foucault, and Jacques Martin	62
5	Bodies, Sickness, and Disjunction: Deleuze, Klossowski, and the Revocation of Nietzsche	84
6	Objects, Reserve, and the General Economy: Klossowski, Bataille, and Sade	111
7	Conclusion: Intellectual Hospitality	130
	Notes	*143*
	Bibliography	*205*
	Index	*219*

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This book was written almost entirely on the incomparable third floor of Ellis Library in my home town of Columbia, Missouri, and all said and done, it is ultimately a reflection on the electrifying austerity of Midwestern space. It is dedicated to the memory of my mother, Marion Dean Kaufman, and above all to my father, Marvin Kaufman, who is both the greatest practical philosopher and the most extraordinary person I have ever encountered.

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The Delirium of Praise

1 *Introduction*

Noli me legere (Don't read me)

When Michel Foucault writes of his friend and fellow philosopher Gilles Deleuze that "someday this century will be known as Deleuzian," how is such a remark to be deciphered? Is Foucault being hyperbolic, ironic, or absolutely serious? Moreover, when laudatory statements such as this are pronounced regularly by an entire network of twentieth-century French intellectuals who write essays and even books about each other, how are these statements to be read? It would be easy to dismiss such excessive praise as neither serious nor substantial enough to merit scholarly attention. Or such laudatory comments might be dismissed for being spoken, as it were, between friends—friends who sing each other's praises for apparently self-serving reasons. Although such objections are not themselves to be dismissed out of hand—and indeed, their lingering presence gives this mode of encomium an edge all its own—this study argues for the seriousness of this mode of exchange.[1] Beyond that, it seeks to characterize the laudatory philosophical essays written between the 1940s and the 1980s by a specific group of French thinkers as a particular form of writing in its own right, a form that itself enacts many of the issues raised by the essays themselves. Indeed, the laudatory philosophical essay serves as an exemplary medium—both in content and

in form—for bringing to the forefront forms of communication or states of being that are often viewed as inferior: chatter, silence, sickness, imbalance, and absence of work among others.

In addition to Deleuze and Foucault (whose exchanges are considered in this study's central and most important chapter), three of their more literary precursors—Georges Bataille, Maurice Blanchot, and Pierre Klossowski—are crucial in defining the laudatory mode of writing in question. Roughly contemporary (Bataille was born in 1897, Klossowski in 1905, and Blanchot in 1907), they have many traits in common. All three work between the genres of literature and philosophy, writing both fiction and criticism but in such a fashion that the boundaries between literature and philosophy are distinctly blurred, especially in Blanchot. While all three work in the Sartrean tradition of the *roman à thèse,* they put a twist on this model in that the "roman" and the "thèse" are equally present in both the fiction and the philosophy. In addition, Bataille, Blanchot, and Klossowski, unlike Deleuze and Foucault, all worked outside the French university system: Bataille as a librarian at the Bibliothèque Nationale; Blanchot as a journalist, reviewer, and exclusively private intellectual; and Klossowski as a translator and painter.

Like Deleuze and Foucault, Bataille, Blanchot, and Klossowski share a penchant for writing laudatory reviews of each other's work. Despite the generational difference (Deleuze was born in 1925 and Foucault in 1926), almost every one of the five engages with each of the others. Although there are some exceptions (Bataille, for example, does not write about Deleuze) and some generational imbalances (as a whole, Deleuze and Foucault write more about the elder trio than vice versa), such a grouping of thinkers writing about each other is remarkable in the way it transcends generational and institutional boundaries. Blanchot, for example, writes a tribute to Foucault that is published by Fata Morgana as a short book; and Klossowski not only writes encomia to Deleuze but also dedicates a short piece of fiction, *Les Derniers Travaux de Gulliver,* to him as well as a huge volume on Nietzsche, *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux*. The grouping together of these five thinkers therefore provides a particularly concise

network of interrelated texts through which to explore the parameters of the laudatory philosophical essay.

Whereas other thinkers are integrally related to the ones in this grouping and might arguably have been included more prominently, it is my contention that these other figures merit attention on a more localized level or alternatively that their mode of engagement does not fall precisely into the same category as the laudatory exchanges in question. Such, for example, is the case with Jacques Derrida and Michel Leiris. While Derrida is central to chapter three on Blanchot and Foucault, he has not engaged extensively with Deleuze or Klossowski. Moreover, his mode of engagement is generally one of playful restraint rather than excessive encomium. In this regard, he would be better placed with a grouping of thinkers that would include Emmanuel Levinas, the Egyptian Jewish poet Edmond Jabès, and Blanchot, who engage with each other in a strikingly restrained, parenthetical, and explicitly Judaic-inflected mode. While such an alternate configuration would form a virtual second volume to this study, it is not directly at issue here.

Michel Leiris is another possible candidate for greater inclusion. Leiris was a close friend and associate of Bataille and Klossowski, and his writings also bridge the domains of literature and philosophy (as well as sociology and ethnology). Although he has been hailed in laudatory essays by Bataille and by Blanchot (whose essay on Leiris "Gazes from Beyond the Grave" will be discussed briefly in chapter two), Leiris did not engage in a parallel mode of laudatory writing as such. He did, however, take part in meetings of the College of Sociology, which he cofounded with Bataille and Roger Caillois. The College of Sociology consisted of a group of men who met regularly between 1937 and 1939 to discuss and give presentations on an eclectic set of topics that had as a central focus the revalorization of the role of the sacred in everyday life. Topics addressed included brotherhoods and secret societies, the army, shamanism, and festivals.

It was under the auspices of the College of Sociology that Bataille came into sustained contact with Klossowski, who was a regular participant and occasional presenter. Of all the pairs of thinkers in this

study, Klossowski and Bataille were the first to meet. This meeting came about in the course of a group dynamic that in certain respects anticipates the textual group dynamic of the Bataille-Blanchot-Deleuze-Foucault-Klossowski configuration. In his study of the College of Sociology, Denis Hollier underscores the desubjectified and impersonal aspect of the group dynamic it fostered: "What is at stake in such groups is not the fusion of finitudes in an *us.* We have to think of it, rather, as a mechanism of erasure, a machine for desubjectified, impersonal enunciation. Less the production of a collective subject, the integration of various *I*'s into the supplementary self-importance of a *we* than the desubjectification through the multiplication of divided voices, the multiplication of singularities that were not cumulative. The utopia of the group is that of an Arcadia with no 'Ego.' No first person."[2]

Such a description provides a framework for reading the series of laudatory exchanges between Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski. It foregrounds two aspects of the College of Sociology group that apply, arguably even better, to this latter grouping of thinkers. First, there is the aspect of *impersonality.* Although the members of the College of Sociology were known to each other on a personal basis, their aim was to inaugurate a group dynamic, founded in a common preoccupation with ritual and the sacred, that would supersede their individual identities so that these identities were indistinguishable from that of the group. In this fashion, impersonality is intricately connected to *desubjectification.* Hollier cites the example of Caillois's 1939 essay "Sociology of the Cleric," which describes the way in which, due to the overpowering collective force of the clergy, the individual cleric is no longer capable of making anything but highly impersonal and depersonalized statements. This cleric is no longer a discrete person but rather is the mouthpiece of the group.[3] Such a loss of individual identity might be viewed pejoratively as an assault on personal integrity, an instance of brainwashing, or a lack of will power, but it is precisely such an effect—and the alternative possibilities of perception it offers—that the members of the College of

Sociology sought out. Whether they achieved this is a matter of some debate.

Walter Benjamin, who attended the College of Sociology meetings sporadically (and who was scheduled to present his "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire" to the College but never did),[4] had considerable criticisms of the "secret society" aspect of the College of Sociology. According to a short piece devoted to Benjamin some thirty years later, Klossowski remarks that "[Benjamin] was trying to apply his analysis to our own situation [that of the College of Sociology]. He wanted to keep us from slipping; despite an appearance of absolute incompatibility, we were taking the risk of playing into the hands of a 'prefascist aestheticism.' "[5] While the group dynamic of the College of Sociology arguably had fascistic resonances, such an argument is necessarily based on the fact that the members of the College of Sociology actually *met* as a group and did so in semi-secrecy. By contrast, the laudatory exchanges in question here are localizable neither by time nor by place.

At issue here is a dynamic, however unfashionable this may sound, that is not easily explained by appealing to the "historical context." To be sure, the very possibility for the mode of philosophical encomium in question rests on an unprecedented overdetermination of related forces: France's peculiar demographics, with Paris as the unrivaled center of education and culture; the related trajectory of so many French intellectuals from the periphery (the provinces) to the center (Paris); the even more monolithically centralized French educational system, especially after the Second World War; the presence of teachers such as Kojève who influenced a whole generation of French thinkers; the equally stunning presence and even possibility of a figure like Sartre and the revolution in literary-philosophical discourse he initiated; certain patterns of intellectual groupings—Dada, the Surrealists, the College of Sociology, the psychoanalytic movement, and so forth; France's involvement in the First and especially the Second World War; the colonial wars, particularly the Algerian revolution; the events of May 1968; "the Jewish question"; and so on.

A whole book might be written on each of these conditions of possibility and their consequences for the five thinkers in question, and each would be a worthwhile project.

This project, however, has as its purpose the enactment of another form of intellectual engagement, one modeled precisely on the example under consideration. To this end, it is not so much a critique of the authors or the laudatory philosophical essays in question as it is an attempt to show how the content of these essays at once mirrors, and is indistinguishable from, the literary encounters that provoked them. These encounters could be minutely situated within the peculiarities of their twentieth-century French context. However, my more extravagant claim is that they are most interesting precisely at those points where their immediate context fails to adequately account for the full force of their excessiveness. In brief, my aim is to delineate that atopic space from which the energy of these encounters emanates, a space that certain historicizing impulses not only would not do justice to, but might not even notice as existing at all.

Unlike the College of Sociology group, this grouping of thinkers is more timeless and placeless—timeless in the sense that they span nearly a half century (and so cannot be brought into the purview of one overarching series of events, such as those around the Second World War); and placeless in that there was no secret meeting space for this network of thinkers. Indeed, some of them never even met (the primary example being Blanchot and Foucault, who will be discussed in chapter three). Their locus of exchange was primarily textual, occurring in such reviews as *Critique, L'Arc, La Nouvelle revue française,* and *Magazine littéraire.* Given such a medium of exchange, the personhood of each thinker is much less present than in a setting such as that of the College of Sociology—or even a more academic milieu, where they would have had regular professional contact. This is not to disregard the fact that many of the thinkers in question were close personal friends and that such traces of the personal haunt their writings about each other (such is the case with Deleuze and Foucault and, to a lesser degree, with Bataille and Blanchot). Yet of signal im-

portance here are the radical possibilities of impersonality that such a mode of exchange presents.

Of related importance is the possibility of *desubjectification,* or breakdown of identity, in this mode of exchange. This mode is something other than a critical dialectic in which the ideas of one thinker are positioned against those of another. Rather than an effort at one-upmanship or an attempt to repudiate or revise another thinker's work, these essays work to a completely different end: praise and affirmation. In these laudatory essays there is no clear distinction between subject and object, but rather an exegetical celebration of the text at hand. The text is treated as if it were a holy text to be worshipped rather than one that might have human flaws. It is in this sense that "exegetical," rather than "critical," is a better descriptive term for the style and form of these writings. Moreover, this particular mode of exegesis is not one of restraint but rather of delirium—a delirium that signals the ecstatic breakdown of identity that occurs when it is no longer discernible what thought belongs to whom and whose voice is being heard at any given moment.

Given the precedent set by the College of Sociology for the exchanges between Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski, it is all the more paradoxical that the exchanges between Klossowski and Bataille, the two writers directly involved with the College, are most resistant to this model of delirious thought exchange. As outlined in chapter six, the exchange between Bataille and Klossowski falls into a much more standard form of critical writing, and with respect to the four other exchanges, it serves as the exception that proves the rule. It is for this reason that this exchange is placed last, even though it was chronologically first. The other exchanges are placed in a more nearly chronological order, with the one between Bataille and Blanchot coming first. The remaining exchanges are organized as links in a chain, where one of the thinkers for a given exchange is carried over to the exchange that follows. Thus, from Bataille-Blanchot, we have Blanchot-Foucault, Foucault-Deleuze, Deleuze-Klossowski, and finally Klossowski-Bataille to complete the circle.

Such a structural framework does not explicitly account for nonadjacent relationships (such as those between Foucault and Klossowski or between Blanchot and Deleuze), but it nonetheless addresses the exchanges that are most important. Furthermore, from a perspective of chronology and genre, such a structure moves in and out of generational and genre-related divisions. The "first generation" pairings of Bataille and Blanchot and of Klossowski and Bataille frame the study and have more literary topics as their focus—the Bataille-Blanchot exchange is staged around a close reading of Louis-René des Forêts's novel *Le Bavard,* and the Klossowski-Bataille exchange around the figure of the Marquis de Sade. The third and fifth chapters, which examine the intergenerational couplings of Blanchot-Foucault and Deleuze-Klossowski, are focused around the work of two philosophers, Derrida and Nietzsche. The central chapter (chapter four), which grounds the whole study in the concept of "absence of work," revolves around the obscure figure of Jacques Martin, a virtually unknown philosopher who formulated the connection between madness and the absence of work and himself embodied this connection.

This brings us to two of this study's most central problems, the absence of work and the mind/body distinction. "The absence of work" resonates with the French word *désoeuvrement,* which is rendered in English as "unworking," "inoperative," "idleness," or "being at loose ends."[6] Although the connotations of this term are pejorative, thinkers such as Blanchot and Jean-Luc Nancy have focused on its affirmative potential. Such a potential comes from the revalorization of the idea of productive expenditure. Rather than measuring human productivity as a function of its aesthetic fullness and completion, a valorizing of the absence of work would affirm a space that exists apart from acceptable social dynamics.[7] This space might be that of madness, of idle talk, or of silence. Whatever its specifics, it would deviate from social proprieties to such an extent that it would present an alternative space or perspective from which to evaluate those norms.

Such a division between the set of norms for a given domain and what lies beyond or outside of them is the topic of Georges Canguil-

hem's influential study *The Normal and the Pathological.* With the history of the life sciences as its subject matter, this study overturns the distinction between the normal and the pathological by showing how the normal owes its very existence to the category of the pathological. Canguilhem writes that "a norm draws its meaning, function, and value from the fact of the existence, outside itself, of what does not meet the requirement it serves."[8] This other realm outside the norm, what Canguilhem terms the "pathological," can, when considered seriously, present a new and instructive framework from which to view the normal. With such a reversal, the unquestioned superiority of normality is called into question. The grouping of Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski enacts such a pathology in the realm of literary and philosophical criticism. Not only does the content of their exchanges revalue highly pathologized forms of communication and states of being (chatter and silence for Bataille and Blanchot, impersonality for Blanchot and Foucault, madness and absence of work for Foucault and Deleuze, the sick body for Deleuze and Klossowski, imbalanced and excessive expenditure for Klossowski and Bataille), but the very *form* of these exchanges revalues the notion of what constitutes a proper critical work. A work of criticism that does not contest, clarify, or discriminate but instead only exuberantly and relentlessly affirms is by most standards not criticism at all but is weak or unhealthy thought.

At issue, then, is a reverse pathologizing of so-called healthy criticism, an examination of its underside, of the energies it leaves untapped and unleashed because it is constricted by the norms of critical propriety. Canguilhem explicitly suggests such a reversal with respect to sickness and health. He writes that "the so-called healthy man thus is *not* healthy. His health is an equilibrium which he redeems on inceptive ruptures. The menace of disease is one of the components of health."[9] Such a reversal of the relation between health and sickness is at the heart of Klossowski's study of Nietzsche, *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux* (which is, more than anything else, the foundational text for this study, and which is taken up in chapter five, on Deleuze and Klossowski). Here, Klossowski analyzes Nie-

tzsche's failing physical and mental health and his letters to friends that describe this condition. While detailing the extreme hardships Nietzsche suffers, these letters also explain how Nietzsche uses his condition of sickness as a means of access to higher insights and new energies of pure thought that enable his thought to exist apart from his body and apart from his very identity as a person. Klossowski writes of Nietzsche that "he struggled at one and the same time with the to-and-fro movement of the impulses, and for a *new cohesion* between his thought and the body as a *corporealizing* thought."[10]

This concept of "corporealizing thought" is central not only to the engagement between Deleuze and Klossowski that takes place over the body of Nietzsche, but more generally to the dynamic between Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski as a whole. By drawing from and building on such pathological states as chatter, sickness, and absence of work, these thinkers create a corporealizing or material form of thought that draws on bodily affects in order to build a new cohesion of thought that constitutes its own alternative form of materiality. This is a form of disembodied materiality that is a pure energy of thought. In this sense, the laudatory exchanges are of unique importance, not so much for what they say, but for what they do or enact in the realm of energized thought: they push form to its limits so that this formal excess returns to reinflect the content. In other words, as with the pathological and the normal, the form is the pathology that inflects and determines the content.

The materiality of the thought-energy unleashed by these exchanges might be considered as another form of erotics. This study might be conceived as a sort of homoerotic history of intellectual exchange in twentieth-century France, for it certainly documents the most intense of exchanges between men. And to be sure, it is no coincidence that all the thinkers in question here are men. On an institutional level alone such a configuration of women, or even of men and women, would have been nearly impossible. Yet despite the maleness of these five thinkers, I contend that their mode of writing *between* each other is not rooted in an essential masculinity. The energy between these thinkers is not so much a male energy as it is a

thing energy, an energy of *nongendered* stuff, which of course harks back to an extreme masculinist privilege, that of *not* being delimited by a gender. Yet it is my hope to show that this is not a necessarily masculinist privilege, that it can also be a feminist one, as I will indicate in chapter five.[11] This is why it is perhaps ultimately more deceptive than not to term this dynamic "homoerotic"—not because it is not erotic, but because it is not necessarily "homo." My claim is that these thought-encounters are not between persons as such. Or more specifically, they are both extremely personal encounters between persons (between men) and also preeminently *im*personal encounters—points at which human connections are missed (Blanchot-Foucault), or abandoned (Foucault-Deleuze), or perhaps just not all that relevant.

Given that at its most basic level this study seeks to delineate a genre of philosophical writing omnipresent in mid-twentieth-century France (and generally not recognized as such), it is useful to position the laudatory philosophical essay with respect to the question of genre.[12] In "The Law of Genre," one of Derrida's readings of Blanchot's *récit* "La Folie du jour," Derrida points to Gerard Genette's distinction between *genre* and *mode*, and specifically to the distinction between mode as a purely formal category and genre as a content-based one. Derrida goes on to argue, through a close reading of Blanchot's *récit,* that the text itself undermines the strict categorization of mode and genre. He writes of Genette that "one might also question the extent to which his argument can help us read a given text when it behaves in a given way with regard to mode and genre, especially when the text does not seem to be written sensibly within their limits but rather about the very subject of those limits and the aim of disrupting their order."[13] While the laudatory essays at hand indeed disrupt the ordered distinction of content and form by questioning the very limits of such a division, they do so from the position of form—by pushing form to its limits. Genette's equation of form with mode is thus a useful, albeit restrictive one. It is according to a logic in which form modifies yet ultimately takes precedence over content that I have chosen to employ the term *mode* as a closer approxima-

tion than the term *genre* of the dynamic in question here (although at another and more Derridean level, the two terms are virtually interchangeable).

In view of this emphasis on form as it inflects content as opposed to the reverse, it is essential to distinguish how a form-based reading would differ from a more customary content-based one. This is in no way a denigration of the content-based approach but is rather an attempt to do something else, to open this very rich material to another and different perspective afforded by a more formal approach. To this end, I will allude briefly to several content-based approaches to this same material and outline how they differ from the approach being expounded here.

To start with Bataille and Blanchot, we might consider a content-based approach that links them together by way of a common theme that comes out most clearly in reference to a third figure. Such is the case, for example, in Raymond Aron's comparison in *Les Modernes* of Bataille's *La Part maudite* [The Accursed Share] and Blanchot's *Lautréamont et Sade* (both of which appeared in 1949). Aron describes Bataille's preoccupation with excess and limits, a preoccupation that is illustrated by Bataille's attention to Sade ("it is the triumph of Sade").[14] He then describes Blanchot in similar terms as someone also in quest of the "absolute event." Once again, the guiding light is Sade: "Thus the French Revolution and Sade appeared simultaneously to Maurice Blanchot, and through them history and literature reached the radicality of sense in which [Sade] was abolished during the Terror. Sublime frenzy."[15] While such a thematic linking of two thinkers by way of a third party is very close to the type of analysis I engage in here, the crucial difference is that my analysis is not so much focused on a particular theme or third figure per se as on how such themes and figures mirror the very form of the exchange between the two thinkers in question.

This mirroring between content and form with respect to a third figure is played out in chapter two. The exchange between Bataille and Blanchot is broached by way of their common interest in Louis-René des Forêts's novel *Le Bavard,* a novel consisting entirely of the

narrator's long-winded chatter, a chatter the narrator himself links to silence. But such an oscillation between chatter and silence is also the very mode by which Bataille and Blanchot engage with *each other*. In this fashion, the form and the content of their exchanges are no longer clearly separable; yet this breakdown arises from the formal parameters of the exchange and not its explicit content. The third figure is not so much a shared interest but is the very means by which the personhood and identity of the interlocutors is erased, so that ultimately even the boundaries between them and the third figure are no longer distinct. Thus, the series of third figures that correspond to each chapter (des Forêts, Derrida, Jacques Martin, Nietzsche, and Sade) do not serve as a point of triangulation with respect to the two interlocutors, but rather as a medium for the breakdown of their proper identities.

With regard to Blanchot and Foucault, Martin Jay positions their exchange in terms of their relation to the visual, or more nearly their stance *against* the visual. Drawing on Blanchot's interest in Orpheus and Eurydice,[16] Jay situates this in terms of a dialectics of the visual: "Orpheus's gaze was for Blanchot the founding act of writing because it crosses the threshold of death and seeks in vain to return to an immediacy of visual presence that cannot be restored. Eurydice's disappearance represents the futility of sight."[17] In a footnote to this discussion, Jay cites the passage from Foucault's essay on Blanchot, "Thought from the Outside," where Foucault describes Blanchot's relation to fiction in terms of the visible and the invisible: "Fiction consists not in showing the invisible, but in showing the extent to which the invisibility of the visible is invisible."[18] My analysis of the same texts by Blanchot and Foucault extends this question of invisibility to the level of the actual person (Blanchot and Foucault never met in person) and shows how this impersonal space of nonmeeting in turn provides a framework for broaching their respective work on friendship.

Once again, the form of the relationship between Blanchot and Foucault—being literary friends without actually meeting—opens up a reexamination of the question of friendship (a question I trace back

to the mythical relationship between Montaigne and La Boétie) and suggests that friendship holds open the possibility for being sustained beyond rupture, nonconnection, or even death. All of the exchanges in question—which often take place in precisely these conditions—might be characterized as relations of friendship, but friendship defined otherwise. While this study is essentially an exposition of this other more impersonal mode of friendship, I have hesitated to apply the term *friendship* to it except in the more limited context of chapter three. This is because the term is so overdetermined by other more personal valences that it becomes nearly impossible to use it with abandon while still maintaining the rigorous impersonality that I am at pains to underscore. Such a sustained oxymoronic coupling of friendship and impersonality is perhaps a project for the future.

One might look to Deleuze and Foucault themselves for an example of an alternate approach to the exchanges between them. This can be found in a series of notes from 1977 that represent Deleuze's last communication with Foucault. These notes present a detailed discussion of the distinction between Deleuze's use of the term *desire* and Foucault's use of the term *power.* Whereas Foucault places desire under the rubric of power, Deleuze sees power as "an affirmation of desire."[19] At issue is a point of impasse where their respective terminologies do not happily coincide. As opposed to this rare exchange, the exchanges I consider between Deleuze and Foucault present the obverse side, one where each thinker takes up the terminology of the other to such an extent that it is no longer clear which set of concepts belong to whom. This blending of concepts goes hand in hand with a blending of the person of the thinker with his thought. In a series of interviews given after Foucault's death, Deleuze conveys his attentiveness to the person of Foucault, to the gestural traces of his person that were inseparable from his thought. My reading of the exchanges between Deleuze and Foucault positions them not only in regard to their respective terminologies but also with respect to their oscillation between the person and the thought, between the personal and the impersonal, between work and absence of work, and between excess and restraint in their laudatory writings about each other.

In *Modern French Philosophy,* Vincent Descombes locates a point of divergence between Deleuze and Klossowski with respect to how far they espouse the principle of the liquidation of identity. Whereas Klossowski affirms this principle wholeheartedly (for him, there is no stable identity, no origin; everything is a simulation; even eternal recurrence is a parody),[20] Deleuze holds up the need for concrete identities, even if they are ones, such as Platonism, that are to be overthrown.[21] According to Descombes, "This is why the Deleuzian quest for a genuine difference, one which would separate the master from slavery, or true desire from distorted desire, proceeds from an ingenuous, if not feigned belief in the virtues of criticism."[22] By analyzing Deleuze's essay on Klossowski in *The Logic of Sense* in conjunction with Klossowski's study of Nietzsche, I argue in chapter five that *both* thinkers pervert the "virtues of criticism" by revalorizing what constitutes healthy criticism. This is done through recourse to the sick body of Nietzsche and the way this sickness led him to higher insights. Proper speech or criticism is also overturned through recourse to the body of the woman and the body of the Jew, though here in a more controversial fashion.

Finally, we might turn to an exchange that is not treated in detail here, that between Bataille and Foucault. In *Agonies of the Intellectual,* Allan Stoekl makes an argument that reperiodizes the strictly defined split between Foucault's earlier and more literary work, and his later and more philosophical/historical work. Stoekl does this by way of Bataille, arguing that Foucault's interest in transgression, which was first articulated in his 1963 essay on Bataille, "A Preface to Transgression," continues to inform his later interest in knowledge and power. Stoekl thus presents Bataille as a force that renders Foucault's work more homogeneous.[23] Similarly, this study argues for a larger and even more radical homogeneity between the grouping of French thinkers in question. While most analyses tend to minutely differentiate between this network of thinkers (and, to be sure, there are many important distinctions to be made), this study aims to reposition these thinkers in terms of a radical *convergence* that takes place in the form of their delirious praise of each other. Such a "big bang"[24]

reading of these thinkers downplays their very real differences in favor of identity-shattering convergence, but such a form of textual violence is necessary in that it raises new sets of questions and enables new forms of perception.

One such new perception that I hope to convey is that of a "phantom community" of thinkers. This term is taken from Scott Durham's *Phantom Communities: The Simulacrum and the Limits of Postmodernism,* where, through detailed readings of Klossowski, Jean Genet, and J. G. Ballard among others, Durham distinguishes between different models of the simulacrum and in so doing also describes a type of community that overturns the distinction between the individual and the collective. He writes that "we dream of possessing an essentially transpersonal and common subjectivity within the limits of our individual identity. Meanwhile, as we have seen in our discussion of Klossowski's *Baphomet,* this desire is doubled by another: the dream of a purely deterritorialized and transpersonal 'space of spirits,' in which the opposition of individual to collective subjectivity (along with the correlative opposition of subject to object) appears to be miraculously suspended."[25]

It is this apparition of miraculous suspension—suspension of subjectivity, of personality, even of place and time—that is both articulated in the laudatory essays I will be considering and, more importantly, enacted by them. As much as these essays are rooted in the workings of a specific intellectual community, they are simultaneously oriented toward an ephemeral and intangible community that is governed by different rules and logics of exchange. As the conclusion will suggest, these exchanges instantiate not a form of gift exchange between friends but one of hospitality to the stranger. These essays create, as it were, a phantom community of thinkers and thought that is perhaps only visible as such retrospectively and from another place and context.

Note on translation: All translations from French sources with no published English translation are mine. A number of works that I cite were translated into English after the manuscript version of this book

was drafted. For the most part, I have retained my translation in these cases and cited in brackets the published translation, with a note to that effect. Otherwise, translations are taken from the published translations and modifications are indicated. I have provided the original French for those texts that are the specific focus of a given chapter, but for more ancillary citations, I have generally just given the English translation.

2 *Chattering Silences*

Bataille and Blanchot on Louis-René des Forêts's *Le Bavard*

Georges Bataille and Maurice Blanchot—who have been characterized as "this century's pair of legendary friends"[1]—first met in 1940. From this point onward, the work of each thinker was so much an explicit dialogue with that of the other that it is sometimes hard to distinguish one oeuvre from the other. Nonetheless, the two remain eminently distinct: while Bataille is the thinker of excess, eroticism, and transgression, Blanchot is the thinker of restraint, the neuter, and thought from the outside.[2]

What is at issue here, however, is not a comparison of the two thinkers per se, but rather an exploration of how their laudatory writings about each other both reflect and encapsulate their proper oeuvres *and* go beyond such a mirroring into a different realm altogether. This other realm is one where two seemingly opposite entities—chatter and silence—are brought together and take on a life of their own. In other words, two qualities that might generally be used in a pejorative fashion to discount the value of what they refer to are—in the context of Bataille and Blanchot's writings about each other—of extreme value, for they pose fundamental questions about the value systems of critical writing as such. These questions are posed most forcefully by way of a third party, Louis-René des Forêts, whose novel *Le*

Bavard [The chatterbox] deeply touched both Bataille and Blanchot, and who served as a posthumous framework for Blanchot to write about Bataille. Moreover, des Forêts's strange and exceptional novel articulates the intricate balance of chatter and silence that is at the heart of the exchange between Bataille and Blanchot.

Just as Blanchot's 1971 collection of essays *L'Amitié* [Friendship] is framed by poignant expressions of homage to Bataille,[3] so too the book's central chapter is itself framed by references to Bataille. This chapter, "La Parole vaine" [Idle speech], on des Forêts's *Le Bavard,* begins as follows:

> This is not a "work of criticism." I would have even renounced, by a movement I cannot account for, any speech which might appear as commentary, had I not recalled a few words spoken by Georges Bataille on *Le Bavard,* shortly before his death: this story seemed to him one of the most staggering that had ever been written; he felt it close to him, close in the fashion of a sliding truth that draws you into its slippage; it was perhaps one of the last things he read; but as he had almost no more desire to write, he asked me, knowing how much this story had touched me as well, if one day I would not come to speak about it. I kept silent. This silence that is today common to us, but which I alone remember—I must try to respond to this silence by continuing this conversation.[4]

Blanchot's introduction to his essay on des Forêts might serve as a thematic epigraph to Blanchot's incessant writing on Bataille and Bataille's incessant silence on Blanchot. Furthermore, this passage schematizes many of the issues that will recur throughout this study. Of signal importance is the phrase "this is not a 'work of criticism.' " This epithet might serve as the implicit motto for all the laudatory encounters in question here—Bataille-Blanchot, Blanchot-Foucault, Foucault-Deleuze, Deleuze-Klossowski, and, with some qualifications, Bataille-Klossowski. These exchanges, dialogues, and conversations *are not works of criticism.* They do not seek to explain, revise, or transcend. Their mode is not one of argumentation, and it is not straightforwardly dialectical. Moreover, these exchanges are not balanced and even.[5] While the various sets of thinkers indeed enter into

the terms of an exchange—terms that disintegrate the boundaries between one thinker and the other—these terms do not necessitate equal and opposite attention to the other but indeed foreclose it. Thus we are often confronted by exchanges in which one thinker writes of the other much more excessively than in the reverse case. Such "exchanges" may in fact transpire after a death and perhaps even take that death as their central guidepost.[6]

In the present case, Blanchot writes on des Forêts as a sort of proxy for Bataille, yet Blanchot also uses des Forêts as a proxy to write about Bataille. Most importantly, Blanchot writes on both in order at once to keep, and to respond to, the silence "that is . . . common to us." Silence is of supreme importance in the five exchanges that follow, for what is in one sense an almost incessant speaking about the other is simultaneously—and without contradiction—the only possibility for keeping a silence.[7] Such a play of silence and silence's excess, *bavardage* or "chatter," is the central concern of des Forêts's *Le Bavard.*

Des Forêts's 1946 novel *Le Bavard* is the first and major irruption in an oeuvre that is itself characterized by long periods of silence. Since his first novel and a much later collection of stories, *La Chambre des enfants,* des Forêts has primarily published poetry and fragmentary writings, with the exception of his recent genre-defying *Ostinato.*[8] "La Parole vaine," Blanchot's 1963 review of *Le Bavard* that was included as an afterword to the novel's second edition, was of singular importance in establishing des Forêts as a major writer, though he remains virtually unknown in English. *Le Bavard* might be considered as a *roman à thèse* that marks a notable departure from the Sartrean model. Rather than staging characters as mouthpieces for specific philosophical positions, *Le Bavard* depicts a central character who is of philosophical significance not for what he says but for the way he says it. At issue here is a narrator who willfully and avowedly manipulates the reader by a barrage of incessant chatter. Given such a structure, the form of the narration is far more important than anything actually contained in the narrative.[9]

From the outset, *Le Bavard* dramatizes the central tension between chatter and silence. The story's narrator, the *bavard* of the title, is by

certain accounts a very silent man: "My friends say that I am silence itself."[10] Yet as he readily confesses, he belongs to a singular species of talker, one who is impelled to talk yet has nothing to say: "In short, I wanted to speak and I had absolutely nothing to say" (25).[11] The two hundred pages that follow amply prove this point. Yet more is at stake than merely the meanderings of a long-winded speaker. At issue is a profound question of relation, not only between speaker and interlocutor but also between truth and lying, waiting and impatience, language and silence. The *bavard* speaks of this relation as a type of game "that in the first place consists of keeping the interlocutor breathless, by the simulacrum of a rather deplorable tic, to bewilder him with what could have been, what perhaps was, what surely was not, what it would have been good for it to be, and what would have been unfortunate for it not to be and what was left unsaid and what was said that was not, and so on and so forth until finally at wits' end, exclaiming, 'To the point, to the point!'—you are assured, by this furious call to order, that you have not entirely wasted your time" (48–49).[12] Such a confounding profusion of verbiage, elevated to the level of a game, is precisely what follows this passage, primarily in the form of a lengthy narration of the *bavard*'s encounter with a woman in a bar—a woman to whom he confides another lengthy discourse that he afterward confesses to have forgotten: "However annoying and implausible this declaration may be in some respects, I have completely forgotten what my avowals were, for the good reason that, while uttering them, I was paying no attention to them. Let me explain. For me, the essential thing was to chatter, the nature of my chatter mattering very little to me" (88–89).[13]

Chatter is in this manner elevated as a form in its own right—a form that, as such, far surpasses anything that the content of the chatter might disclose. In a similar fashion, we must consider the confoundingly personal and impersonal laudatory exchanges that characterize a generation of French thinkers—here Bataille and Blanchot specifically—as illustrating a form that stands slightly apart from its content.[14] Such a form is marked by the not altogether uncommon condition of talking incessantly and saying nothing. Des

Forêts's *bavard* is a model of such a perverse attention to form. After weaving a twisted narrative that he then fully denies, the *bavard* casts doubt in the final lines on this very denial ("My revenge will be to never let [the deceived public] know if I was still lying when I claimed to be lying" [214]).[15] In the final analysis, it is quite evident that whatever the truth-status of his statements, the *bavard* has said exactly nothing.

But we might further question whether saying exactly nothing is really saying nothing. Instead of a double nothing, might this not rather be a double something? That is, in laying bare the nothingness of a text, in making that nothingness excessive, perhaps something extraordinary is being iterated apart from the text's confirmed nothingness. At least, that is this study's claim for why the genre of dialogue it seeks to address and formulate is worth this kind of attention. In the genre of literary-philosophical encomium described here, there is ultimately no text, or there is a "no-text" apart from any ostensible text being addressed. That is why we can say there is a no-text between Bataille and Blanchot at the heart of Blanchot's reading of des Forêts and why, later on, we will characterize the exchange between Foucault and Deleuze as one marked by the absence of work, where work is both text and the text's labor.[16] Here it must be emphasized that this no-text or absence or work is not in the least derogatory or negative; if anything, it is affirmative—affirming that what is said is not in vain, or more nearly, that "la parole vaine" escapes tautology and is not in itself vain.

The genre of literary-philosophical encomium falls, in some sense, into the deprecated realm of chatter. In particular, given that the thinkers in question are recognized as friends, there is a temptation not to take their mutually laudatory writings seriously, but rather to dismiss them as overly personal chatter surrounding an otherwise engaged philosophical inquiry. At stake here is the reversal of this equation, or in other words, giving the chatter as such more serious scrutiny than anything else. Des Forêts's *bavard* himself performs this reversal, first by provoking his audience, and then by seeking to convince them of the importance of his enterprise. First, the *bavard* ad-

mits that he may have been lying: "And what if all my chatter was only a lie?" (193).[17] Such an admission is in no way an admission of guilt. To the contrary, it is both an implication of the interlocutor ("Who among you will cast a stone at me?" [192])[18] and a confirmation of the interlocutor's listening privilege: "Don't worry that you've wasted your time listening to lies, since you have been privileged to witness a crisis of chatter, which is surely more instructive than reading a report of it, even if it were free from all literary intention" (194).[19]

In this fashion, the *bavard* claims for his narrative a purposiveness and an instructive value that other literature lacks. To institute a crisis of chatter—or to take chatter seriously—would be to undermine the hierarchy between chatter and "meaningful" speech. As Peter Fenves notes in his study of chatter in Kierkegaard, "Chatter 'itself' can be clarified only if emptiness and idleness command respect, if they are treated as tracts of language in its retreat from the task of fulfilling functions and contributing to already established operations, if the very concepts of emptiness and idleness disengage themselves from symmetrical opposition to fullness and proper functioning."[20] According to such a reading, chatter would have a value that supersedes the hierarchy of meaningful speech / empty speech. Chatter acknowledged as such would refuse the sanctioned separation of these terms.

In a parallel fashion, Fenves argues for chatter as a means of undoing the separation between speech and silence: "Chatter suspends the passionate disjunction between silence and speaking."[21] If the "crise de bavardage" (194) that des Forêts's *bavard* experiences is one of excessive speaking, then this crisis is proximate to, and indissociable from, a crisis of silence. In "La Parole vaine," Blanchot writes of des Forêts that "his 'I' is so porous that it cannot contain itself, it creates silence on all sides, silence that chatters in order to better conceal itself or turn into mockery. But this solitude must find someone with whom to speak."[22] Such an analysis undermines an all-too-simplistic reading of silence as something negative that must be overcome so that the "truth" that rushes forth might work to set one free. *Le Bavard* reveals just how much such speech does not work. To state

this more strongly, this narrative shows how the social propriety of confessional truth-telling itself masks silences that are generally left unspoken, that are here startlingly spoken, in all their impropriety, by the *bavard*.[23]

Blanchot goes on to distinguish between "chatter" and "speech," where it is speech, not chatter, that risks shutting language down. Here, Blanchot questions the received notion that one should both speak and keep silences properly:

> Chatter is the shame of language. To chatter is not to speak. The stuff of speech destroys silence while at the same time impeding speech. When one chatters, nothing true is said, even if nothing false is said, because one is not truly speaking. This speech that does not speak, speech of diversion that goes every which way, with which one passes from one subject to another, without knowing what it is about, speaking equally of everything, the so-called serious things, the so-called insignificant things, in an equal movement of interest, precisely because it is understood that one is speaking of nothing, in such a manner of saying, running away from silence, or running away from the fear of expressing oneself—this is the object of our constant reproach. . . . The reference to the serious, that demands that one only speak in good earnest, in keeping with solemnity, or that one not speak at all but only begin to speak—this would soon appear as an attempt to close down language; it is a matter of keeping words back on the pretext of returning them their dignity; silence is imposed because the one speaking alone retains the right to speak; vain speech is denounced and is substituted by trenchant speech that does not speak but commands.[24]

This opposition between the pure silence of chatter and the impure one of proper speech will be taken up at length in chapter five on Deleuze and Klossowski, but suffice it to underscore Blanchot's analysis of the forced silence, the imposition on words of a commanding order. This forced silence is the tyranny of critique, the notion that critical writing and thinking should attain some purpose, unmask something, render the object more approachable. Such critique belies other barely approachable spaces that might fall under

such categories as madness, nothingness, or even the Real.[25] These other spaces may be formed either through great chatter or through greater silences. Both speak a form of silent proximity with, of deference to, the other. Such spaces would not operate according to laws of equal and opposite exchange. In this sense, there is no hard and fast distinction to be made between the *bavards* (Blanchot here, but in what follows also Deleuze) and their more silent interlocutory counterparts (Bataille here, but in what follows also Foucault), for I would insist that both are bound by the same inexorable laws of the game of thought to which they have willfully given themselves.

The Game of Thought

The noncontradictory proximity of chatter and silence in des Forêts's *Le Bavard* corresponds to the intricate network of what might also be termed chatter and silence in the written exchanges between Bataille and Blanchot. In contrast to Blanchot's profusion of writing on Bataille, Bataille is largely silent on Blanchot. This is not to say that Bataille's few pronouncements on Blanchot are insignificant, but rather that Bataille's silence itself speaks as much as what he actually wrote, especially when juxtaposed with what might have been pronounced. This might-have-been is announced by a solitary footnote in the Pléiade edition of Bataille's *Oeuvres complètes:* "In 1941, through the intermediary of Pierre Prévost, Bataille met Maurice Blanchot[26] 'with whom he formed an immediate bond of admiration and understanding.' The 'infinite conversation' founded on their friendship dates from this time. It seems that Bataille had planned to write two works on Maurice Blanchot and was unable to carry them out."[27] Here one can only wonder at the doubling of this absence—not one but two entire books, the silence of which resounds in the two articles that Bataille actually devoted to Blanchot.

The first article, a review of Blanchot's *Au moment voulu* [When the Time Comes] is quite fittingly entitled "Silence et littérature." Thus, Bataille's virtual silence on Blanchot is broken by a piece on silence in Blanchot. Bataille begins by suggesting a cinematic counter-

part to Blanchot's textual silences: "In wanting to compare Maurice Blanchot to Wells's 'invisible man,' there is an element of displaced humor. First of all, the author in question never wanted to make this visible nothingness appear, this visible nothingness that Wells's shadow revealed by undoing the bandages in which it was wrapped. On another level, it is silence that reveals the sentences that undo—or develop, if you will—his romantic works. I will acknowledge, however, that except for this difference, the image is exact. These words have a single object, silence."[28] Here, Bataille points to the same paradox that Blanchot reads in des Forêts's *Le Bavard,* namely, the way in which the work—here, the literary work—can in fact summon like a specter the very silence that its profusion of words would seem to undermine. If this seems already overly paradoxical, then the paradox might be pushed further by declaring that such silences *are only unmasked by a profusion of chatter—Le Bavard* being the crowning achievement.

Yet there is more than just paradox in Blanchot's treatment of silence; there is also—especially in Blanchot's short fiction—extreme consistency. Blanchot's *récits* do not conjure silence by the lengthy talking about talking of *Le Bavard,* but instead they tell a quest for silence *as* their story. Such is the case throughout Blanchot's fiction and most particularly in *L'Arrêt de mort* [Death sentence], which Bataille cites at length in "Silence et littérature." To quote from Bataille quoting Blanchot, "My only strong point was my silence. Such a great silence seems incredible to me when I think about it, not a virtue, because it in no way occurred to me to talk, but precisely that the silence never said to itself: be careful, there is something here which you owe me an explanation for. . . . I have lost silence, and the regret I feel over that is immeasurable. I cannot describe the pain that invades a man once he has begun to speak."[29] In this passage an ongoing passion for silence is affirmed, the withdrawal of silence mourned. Whereas Blanchot's reading of des Forêts's *bavard* draws out all that is most paradoxical in silence, Blanchot's own characters assume a more muted contentment in, even affirmation of, silence.[30]

In this regard, the Blanchotian paradox of silence is not so much the will to talk as a way of keeping silent as it is a pure affirmation of silence in which words also take part.

In sum, we are left with a series of slightly incongruous relations between silence and speaking in Blanchot, Bataille, and des Forêts: Blanchot writing about des Forêts's *Le Bavard* while keeping a silence about Bataille; Blanchot also writing incessantly on Bataille; Bataille being silent towards Blanchot, but when he does speak, speaking about silence in Blanchot, but even here keeping oddly silent about the silence in question (that of *Au moment voulu*) and instead signaling another *récit*'s silence (*L'Arrêt de mort*). The logic at work is one of continuous displacement, sometimes muted, sometimes extreme —being silent sometimes by being silent, at other times by talking about silence, at other times by just talking. What is to be made of these ever-shifting silences? One might consider them as a game of thought.

The expression "jeu de la pensée" [game of thought] is used by both Bataille and Blanchot in writing about the other. It is concomitant with a certain rigor of engagement to the other that is strictly measured out in increments of speech and silence. In "Ce monde où nous mourons" [This world where we die], Bataille's 1957 review of Blanchot's *Le Dernier Homme* [The Last Man], he elaborates on this thought-game: "The game of thought requires strength, rigor such that, at another angle, the strength and rigor required for the game's construction give the impression of a laxity. The acrobat in the void is subject to more precise rules than the mason who never leaves the ground. The mason *produces,* but at the limit of the impossible the acrobat immediately lets go of what he has seized. He stops. The stop indicates a lack of breath, and the thought that would respond to the effort of thought would be that which we would arrive at if, in the end, there were no lack of breath."[31] This thought-game, then, enjoys the precision of the acrobat flying through air and the equal precision of that empty space, the all-important invisible silence of air. But this game also rests on air that does not lack, a pure breath that is sus-

tained in breath through various exertions *without* losing breath. Such a rigor of exertion in thin air without losing breath is the game of thought that Bataille and Blanchot engage in together.[32]

Blanchot further specifies the parameters of the thought-game in his essay of the same title, "Le Jeu de la pensée," written on the event of Bataille's death in 1963: "And . . . let us not forget that this game of thought cannot be played alone; there must be two partners in play and they must engage in the game with the same decision, the same frankness, and the same relation to the stakes. To state this still more precisely, one could say that the conversation they hold, this movement of turning together toward the infinite of affirmation, is similar to the dialogue that occurs between two persons throwing dice."[33] Here, Blanchot evokes yet another image for the game of thought, which is none other than the celebrated throwing of dice, played as the conversation that draws together two gamblers.[34]

These two images—the acrobat and the gambler—are exemplary in that they indicate two distinct yet overlapping poles in the thought-game that is also the conversation between Bataille and Blanchot. Both the acrobat and the gambler engage in highly rigorous and rule-governed games, games that necessitate a letting-go into thin air and the risk this entails. Yet in these games, two quite different varieties of movement are at stake: one is a movement of silence, played out as a leaping of the acrobat into air, and played also in the hope of not losing air (breath); the second is more properly a dialogue or conversation, the dialogue of two dice players locked together in the game of chance.[35]

The Game of the Acrobat

Let us first broach the silence of the acrobat, or the putting into play of thought against air, thought orchestrated so as not to lose breath. This acrobatic silence is a solitary one that exploits the paradoxes of silence by *speaking so as to keep silent.* Such an acrobatic silence is put into play through a language that speaks to silence as such in that there can be no response to it, no proper engagement

with it. It is a language of superlative statements often hidden behind parentheses and couched where they would not be expected. Such, for example, are the extraordinary encomia that Bataille unleashes in "Ce monde où nous mourons." These are encomia addressed to Blanchot and his work, yet also addressed, as it were, to thin air. After citing a long passage from Blanchot's *Le Dernier Homme* (one that, not coincidentally, concerns "the void"),[36] Bataille glosses it with the following sentence: "I underlined the sentences to which I wanted to attract attention (the preceding sentences, if they are to open themselves to the reader, require him to descend even deeper into the profundity of this book—apparently the most profound of all books)."[37] Here we are left hanging, as on the falling end of a trapeze, breathless for more. Yet this parenthetical remark is passed over just as miraculously as it appeared, and a continuation of the analysis of "the void" ensues. We are simply told, as a parenthetical aside, that this is the most profound of all books, but from this point on, no more breath is spent. There is no possibility for response, repartee, or dialogue. This acrobatic movement of lightning speed has left glances hanging where there is no more movement to be perceived.

One might counter that this is but idle praise spilled out carelessly in the service of a literary crony. But such a reading, it seems, quite misses the point: as ironic as this may seem, this mode of addressing the other is entirely beyond the genre of encomium while at the same time abandoning itself freely to this genre. Bataille makes this point in another laudatory moment of the same essay. He writes: "several lines further on the second and final part begins, and here the story arrives at a sublime trajectory. If I use this word *sublime,* it is not in the eulogistic sense (in my eyes, Maurice Blanchot's little book is located beyond, above, any eulogy)."[38] Once again, an extraordinary pronouncement is unleashed by way of a parenthetical gesture—Blanchot's book is beyond praise, above it. This gesture could, of course, be dismissed as just upping the laudatory ante one step more, yet it is such a gesture that touches on the essential silence, the essential solitude of this genre of writing. It touches on the fact that this writing, this praising, is spoken in a void, spoken to the air, spoken

without the possibility of an interlocutor's direct response, or at least without the possibility of addressing the interlocutor as one other than the speaker. Here such a logic of one and another does not properly exist; instead, we are confronted with the acrobatics of purely breathed affirmation.[39]

A third moment of limitless affirmation comes in the concluding lines of "Ce monde où nous mourons," shortly after the anecdote of the acrobat in the void. Bataille writes, "*The Last Man* reveals a world to which we only gain access by a vertiginous movement. But this book is movement where, losing all foundation, we have, if it is possible, the power to see *everything*. It is difficult to speak of *The Last Man,* so greatly does this book escape from the limits where most would want to stay."[40] Bataille forcefully links all at once the vertiginous movement of the acrobat (the extreme encomium of granting *The Last Man* the power to see everything), and the difficulty—even impossibility—of speech. At stake is a dizzying limit-experience that defies description. And inseparable from this limit-experience is a thought-game between Bataille and Blanchot, a thought-game of partial silences, thought addressed to air that reverberates but does not respond.

The Game of Dice

A similar game of thought acrobatics can be delineated in Blanchot's writings on Bataille, in which singular sentences unleash extraordinary encomium. I will note here only one of these superlative moments, since others will be taken up from a slightly different angle in what follows. At the beginning of "L'Affirmation et la passion de la pensée négative," Blanchot writes of Bataille's books that "they say the essential and they are essential—not only by their beauty, their brilliance, and their literary force, which finds its equal in no other writer, but also by their relation to the inquiry to which they bear witness."[41] This evocative pronouncement serves well as a transition between the two overlapping thought-games in question. We

have here in one stroke the unanswerable singularity of the superlative dropped out of thin air but also the evocation of *relation* and the act of *bearing witness.* In other words, there is still another thought-game at work, one that is both singular and double. Its image is the double dealing[42] of the game of chance or, to repeat Blanchot's analogy, the dialogue that occurs between two people throwing dice. It should be underscored that such a dialogue is not a relationship of equality but a *bearing witness* to all that is without equal in the other. It too is a dialogue of silence, but a dialogue of the variety that speaks continuously and that speaks between two.

Blanchot expounds on this form of conversation in "Le Jeu de la pensée" by exposing his own particular form of dialogue with Bataille: "In the precaution from which Georges Bataille never considered himself free, even when speaking with a very old friend, there was no caution nor even simply a concern for the interlocutor. There was much more: a silent appeal to attention so as to confront the risk of a speech spoken in common, also an accord with this reserve that alone allows us to say everything, and, finally, an allusion to a movement toward the unknown to which, almost immediately, two persons together who are bound by something essential are as though obliged to bear witness."[43] This bearing witness is not a repetition or staging of a conversation but a testimony to its ever having happened at all.

Bataille presents such a testament as a series of marginal notes to *L'Expérience intérieure.* At the beginning of this work, Bataille traces the trajectory of his coming to the question of inner experience and how he found this question confounding: "I asked the question of several friends, letting them see part of my disarray: one of them stated simply this principle, that experience itself is authority (but that authority expiates itself)."[44] In this passage, there is an asterisk after "one of them" and the following appears as a footnote: "Maurice Blanchot. Later I refer on two occasions to this conversation."[45] This conversation is, by a certain measure, the very forum, the very possibility, for *L'Expérience intérieure*'s taking place. It is a conversation

that is largely obscured and barely discernible as such, but that also forms the continual dialogue, the continual *bavardage*, of *L'Expérience intérieure*.[46]

One of Bataille's other references to this conversation comes in the section entitled "Le Supplice" [The torment], where Bataille abruptly interjects the following truncated paragraph: "Conversation with Blanchot. I say to him: inner experience has neither goal, nor authority, which justify it. If I explode, burst the concern for a goal, for authority, at the very least, a void subsists. Blanchot reminds me that goal, authority are the requirements of discursive thought; I insist, describing experience in its extreme form, asking him how he believes this to be possible without authority or anything. He tells me that experience itself is authority. On the subject of this authority he adds that it must be expiated."[47] Ironically, this paragraph might for all intents and purposes serve as precisely the model of dialectical discursive thought that Bataille and Blanchot both write against. Indeed, it conforms perfectly to a point-counterpoint unfolding of dialogue: first, "I say to him"; however, "Blanchot reminds me"; but, "I insist"; finally, "he tells me" and "he adds." Yet to read this paragraph as conventional dialogue and nothing more would be to dislocate it from its context. More precisely, it would be to fail to notice how such a dialogue is indeed an exceptional moment in the larger dialogue between Bataille and Blanchot.

Insofar as much of Bataille's oeuvre is a dialogue with, a dialogue that bears witness to, Blanchot, and that the same could be said about Blanchot vis-à-vis Bataille; insofar as theirs is indeed the fabled "infinite conversation" or perhaps even the secret sharing of "inner experience," then theirs is a dialogue and a conversation that cannot be easily delimited. It is also a form of written exchange where the two voices are almost never heard at once. In this regard the point-counterpoint replica of their conversation that Bataille reproduces marks an aberration in an otherwise unrestrained and unanswerable excess of encomia.[48] By emphasizing the back-and-forth continuity of dialogue, this exchange fails to capture the larger silence felt in the interstices between sentences (the continual sense that there is so

much that is not being said) of the overall conversation between Bataille and Blanchot.

The third reference in *L'Expérience intérieure* to Bataille's conversation with Blanchot comes in the following sentence: "Blanchot asked me: why not pursue my inner experience as if I were the last man?"[49] Blanchot thereby proposes to Bataille that he play a thought-game. Blanchot has cast the dice. Bataille writes a response to *Le Dernier Homme* in which he spaces acrobatically flung superlatives, superlatives that do not come to rest on the person of Blanchot but are cast free into the air and do not lose their breath. In this instance, air and silence are Bataille's sole interlocutors, and he is in some sense the last man. So Bataille, too, has cast the dice. This game is recorded as conversation in Bataille's *L'Expérience intérieure,* recorded in all its potential dialectical splendor. Yet this splendor is the splendor of des Forêts's *bavard* who speaks incessantly in order to bring out the silence that is waiting to be exposed.

Bataille and Blanchot are similarly engaged in a game of extreme encomium that is simultaneously part and parcel of their literary and philosophical endeavors. Rather than pursuing dialectical exchange, their philosophical project is to use language so as to better disregard or go beyond the dialectic. Blanchot explains it as follows in "Le Jeu de la pensée":

> Speech bears in it the fortuitous trait that binds thought to chance through the game. . . . It is precisely to such a form of dialogue that a speech engaged in the game of thought leads: the speech Georges Bataille made present to us by a movement that was his own. The thought that plays with and has as its stakes the unlimited in thought—reaching an infinite affirmation—does not come about in the form of an invitation to question and answer, even less to affirm and then contest. It excludes all discussion and disregards all controversy (the working by which two men whose views are at variance bring their differences together, confronting one thesis with another in view of a dialectic reconciliation).[50]

Such a game of thought as dialogue is not dialectical even though it requires a party of two to play. This is a game where dialogue

speaks itself yet also speaks the silence that it is not speaking. Or better yet, dialogue fails to speak itself and also fails to speak the silence it cannot speak. There is always a nondialectical doubling of speech and silence, just as there is also a nondialectical doubling of two games—the game of the acrobat and the game of the dice. Speech as dialogue both works and does not work, and silence only repeats the same. Too little is said and too much is said, and both at once. Blanchot, once again, explains this uncanny phenomenon by reference to his conversations with Bataille:

> Most often when we speak, and also when we hear someone else speaking, we do not fail afterward to experience a feeling of discomfort, as though some shame were attached to using words, whether to say important or insignificant things; in the first case, because we have betrayed them by speaking too adroitly or too awkwardly, in the second, because we have betrayed the seriousness of speech itself. I do not mean to say that every conversation with Georges Bataille was free of this feeling, but rather that speech then took up its own malaise, and as soon as it was sensed, assumed it and respected it in such a way as to offer it another direction.[51]

The literary conversation between Bataille and Blanchot offers the possibility of another direction for speech, and beyond that, for scholarly writing. As Blanchot indicates, such a direction must first elicit the "shame . . . attached to using words" and then compound this shame with a betrayal, here a betrayal of the seriousness of literary or philosophical writing. Through the sentiments of shame and betrayal, we are led to question the very foundations of proper discourse. In other words, is there any language that does not shamefully say too much, that does not constantly offer up morsels of nonmeaning? On the other hand, is there any way to eliminate improper silence, to tell all and keep nothing back? What Bataille and Blanchot show us is that perfectly measured silence and perfectly measured chatter are equally impossible. This may not seem in itself to be such an important insight, yet the significance lies in the way Bataille and Blanchot push this acknowledgment of impossibility into its own

form of affirmation[52] and thereby create another space for intellectual exchange. This is a space of thought where one thinker is neither entirely distinct from, nor completely connected to, the other. It is a disembodied thought nonetheless touched by traces of the personal.[53] It is a form of friendship at once personal and impersonal, and one that breaks with the very standard of reciprocity. It is a form of community that leaves few concrete traces but whose fleeting depth is nonetheless conveyed.

Le Bavard *and Leiris's* L'Age d'homme

As a coda, I will briefly examine this communal space by way of another third figure—Michel Leiris. As with Blanchot's reading of des Forêts, Blanchot's reading of Leiris also singles out questions of silence and affirmation.[54] At the beginning of "La Parole vaine," Blanchot compares the narrator of *Le Bavard* to the narrator of Leiris's novel *L'Age d'homme.* This novel, written explicitly as a form of autobiographical confession (but one which, like *Le Bavard,* also undermines the very genre of confessional writing), was dedicated to Georges Bataille. Although published in 1939, it was written in 1935 before the College of Sociology officially began meeting in 1937.

While *Le Bavard* has no real subject matter beyond the narrator himself, *L'Age d'homme* is as much a glorification of bullfighting as it is anything else.[55] In comparing *Le Bavard* and *L'Age d'homme,* Blanchot finds Leiris's narrator to be less duplicitous and more generous than des Forêts's, and Blanchot locates in the two narratives a similar refusal of silence. He writes of *L'Age d'homme* that "in looking for some framework, we would be even more tempted to evoke the particular movement on that page of *L'Age d'homme* where the writer finds no other reason for his penchant for confession than the refusal to say nothing, revealing that the most irrepressible speech, one which knows neither limit nor end, originates in its own impossibility."[56] In Leiris, there is an impulse to confess in order to "refuse to say nothing." Once again, speech (or writing) is not about its explicit content but is instead a response to an ethical imperative not to be silent.

Such a tactic is, in turn, applicable to the laudatory exchanges between Bataille and Blanchot. These exchanges might be read not so much as responding to a desire to praise and be praised as responding to an imperative to refuse the purity of silence. In "Gazes from Beyond the Grave," an essay devoted to Leiris's *L'Age d'homme,* Blanchot reiterates this double bind of confession as it applies to speech and silence: "There is a sin in confession that no confession can atone for, since it is committed by being avowed and is aggravated as soon as it is absolved: the offense here is linked to justification, innocence. Yet wanting this innocence is necessary, we cannot do without it, so that everything is an offense, both the avowal and the refusal of the avowal. . . . But it must be noted that satisfaction is here the opposite of satisfaction, that it not only signifies an excessive inclination to speak but has its origin in the refusal to speak, in an 'I cannot speak' that by its excesses ends up opening the mouth."[57]

At issue here is a refusal to speak (silence) that, in also refusing purity and innocence, is transformed into excessive speech (confession). Confession, or chatter in the case of the *bavard,* would be the outcome of a tension at the heart of silence, the struggle to maintain an affirmation rather than a negation. Such an affirmation, which is at once a refusal of silence and a refusal of meaningful speech, may result in a delirium of chatter that opens up the possibility of new and different forms of communication. As Blanchot writes of Leiris: "The 'objective' tone of *The Age of Man,* the vigilant, sometimes almost formal coldness that emerges in it are promoted by the underground 'I do not want to speak' . . . of this fundamental reticence that first prevents, then deranges, all communication."[58] The deranged communication between Bataille and Blanchot, which appears in print as excessive encomium, thus follows an intricate, virtually synchronic trajectory: it is silence; it is also the imperative to shatter that silence; and above all, it is the coexisting of both silence and confessional chatter as a form in its own right, a form of chattering silence.

3 *"O My Friends, There Is No Friend"*

Blanchot, Foucault, and Derrida

There is no friendship there, in that space that supports this unconscious. —*Jacques Lacan*

To write is to write to another. Not for another, *as if one could take away that other's otherness, but* to another. *To write, as Gertrude Stein and Maurice Blanchot both have said, is to write to a stranger, to a friend.* —*Kathy Acker*

Given that the exchanges between Bataille and Blanchot have been broached through the framework of chatter and silence, it might be asked very justly: What about friendship? Of all the groupings of thinkers in this study, Bataille and Blanchot are the ones most renowned for their monumental friendship. As noted earlier, they have been characterized by Jacques Derrida as "this century's pair of legendary friends."[1] Their exchanges are not only marked by the personal traces of their friendship but are also entirely caught up in a discourse about friendship. Blanchot's *L'Amitié* [Friendship] is framed by Bataille. Both the first essay, "Naissance de l'art," and the last essay, "L'Amitié," are about Bataille. The book's epigraph, by Bataille, echoes the "l'amitié" of the title: "friends even to the state of profound friendship where a man abandoned, abandoned by all his friends, meets up in life with the one who will accompany him beyond life, himself without life, capable of free friendship, detached from any ties."[2] This seemingly contradictory state of profound

friendship that exists alongside friendship's abandonment will be the central concern of this chapter.

The friendship between Bataille and Blanchot was unquestionably marked by such a profundity, taking its place in a lineage of male literary friendship that goes at least as far back in the French tradition as Montaigne and the fabled Etienne de la Boétie. In *Politiques de l'amitié,* Jacques Derrida refers to this lineage, and to the penchant these literary friends have for both citing each other and writing about friendship, when he writes: "[There are thus] quoted quotations on the subject of the possibility of quoting great friends, the true ones. Even if there are more than two friends, the model (*exemplar*) will most often be furnished by a twosome, by some great couples of friends. . . . Our culture, our school, our literature are the theatre of these couples—and the posterity of these great friends."[3] This study is itself organized as a theatre of couples, even though there are always more friends in the background. In this chapter, the background friend, the background thinker, is Jacques Derrida.

The friendship between Bataille and Blanchot—and, as we will see in the next chapter, between Foucault and Deleuze—can quite readily be mapped onto this lineage of male literary friendship. It is easy to demarcate and categorize a great friendship when it is hailed as such by both parties, and all the more so when both parties are renowned men of letters. It is more difficult to perceive the attributes of friendship in a relationship that, for a variety of reasons, may not be able to define itself so gloriously as such.[4] Thus the latter case, not the former, serves as a limit case for the very thinking about friendship. And since several of the thinkers in question (especially Bataille, Blanchot, and Foucault—and to some extent Deleuze) are preoccupied precisely with pushing the thinking of friendship to its limits—locating friendship in a realm seemingly too impersonal or too contradictory to be classified as such—it seems fitting, and beyond that necessary, to outline such a theory of "unfriendly" friendship through recourse to a pair of *unlikely* friends rather than to two friends whose friendship is commonly extolled. Before suggesting the pair of Blanchot and Foucault as a better model than Bataille and Blanchot for

this other form of friendship, I will turn first to the preeminent model of male friendship in the French tradition to better elucidate how Blanchot and Foucault both mirror, and ultimately depart from, this model.

In his famous essay "De l'amitié" [On friendship], written explicitly as a memoriam to, and an exposition of, his remarkable friendship with Etienne de la Boétie, Michel de Montaigne depicts friendship as the loftiest relationship available to man (and quite literally so, since he does not find women capable of such sentiments). He characterizes it in uniformly positive terms: "In friendship there is a general and universal warmth, restrained nevertheless and even, a constant and calm warmth, all gentleness and smoothness, with no roughness or sting about it."[5] Such a conception of friendship allows for nothing base, nothing that does not partake of the highest purity and harmony. Montaigne contrasts this form of friendship, which is supremely illustrated by his relation with La Boétie, with a more base and everyday form of friendship. The latter form is characterized by the potential for friendship's negation. Montaigne provides the following two quotations to illustrate the contrasting nature of the two forms of friendship: " 'Love him,' said Chilo, 'as if one day you may come to hate him. Hate him as if you will come to love him.' This precept, abhorrent though it is in this supreme and perfect relationship, is sound when applied to commonplace and everyday friendships, to which we must apply Aristotle's habitual phrase: 'O my friends, there is no friend!' "[6] Montaigne takes friendship's potential to turn into hatred as a sign that it is a lesser and everyday form of friendship. He uses Aristotle's contradictory pronouncement "O my friends, there is no friend" as an illustration of this lesser form of friendship and as a means of explicating the superlative friendship, devoid of strife and hatred, which was his and La Boétie's.

The actual superlative nature of this friendship has been called into question by many critics who amply demonstrate Montaigne's self-interested relationship to La Boétie, as well as the way Montaigne's extreme definition of friendship gets toned down in later essays such as "L'Art de conférer" and "De la vanité." It is also note-

worthy that Montaigne's inclusion of La Boétie's twenty-nine sonnets in the 1580 version of the *Essais* is already excised from his personal copy of the 1588 edition.[7] Such criticism notwithstanding, the superlative register of Montaigne's "De l'amitié," whether justified or not, sets the tone for subsequent considerations of friendship in the French philosophical and literary tradition.

Another aspect central to Montaigne's analysis of friendship is its singular aspect, the way in which his friendship with La Boétie is completely incomparable. Montaigne writes of their friendship that it "has no model but itself, and can only be compared to itself."[8] Furthermore, he characterizes his friendship with La Boétie as "this friendship . . . so complete and perfect that its like has surely never been read of, and nothing comparable is to be seen among the men of our day. So many circumstances are needed to build it up that it is something if fate achieves it once in three centuries."[9] Here, Montaigne implicitly makes an extraordinary claim for his friendship with La Boétie. Since theirs is one of these perfect and complete friendships, it follows that their coming together as friends is just this type of singular event that only takes place every three centuries.

Glauser is quick to note both the underside and the overly sublime aspect of such a statement: "This is to speak with little friendliness of the friendships of others; in order to defend his friendship, [Montaigne] must deny the others. Absolute friendship follows its course unobstructed, urged onwards by the pleasure the essayist takes in speaking of it. It is born miraculously: 'par ce c'estoit luy; parce que c'estoit moy' [because it was he, because it was I], and then it is purified by death."[10] It is precisely such excesses that Blanchot's less accusatory and less lofty version of friendship avoids, while at the same time echoing Montaigne's concept of friendship's singularity.

Alongside his notion of friendship's singularity, Montaigne also describes a friendship so absolute that the souls of the two friends are no longer clearly distinguishable: "Everything being in effect common between them—will, thoughts, opinions, wives, children, honor, and life—and their agreement being that of one soul in two bodies, according to Aristotle's very proper definition, they can neither lend

nor give one another anything."[11] In this model of relationship, exchange on the order of a gift economy—giving, lending, repaying—is not thinkable as such because it would imply a separation between the two friends that is not there in the first place.[12] In this absolute model of friendship, it is not possible to lose or gain possessions or relations because these outside entities are already given as common.

What it *is* possible to lose, according to Montaigne, is "all my will" [volonté]: "I may truly say *lose,* for it left us with nothing that was our own, nothing that was either his or mine."[13] The only item that falls into an economy of loss or gain is thought itself, for the thought of the one is no longer proper to him but becomes part and parcel of the thought of the other. It is this concept above all that is indispensable for an understanding of the group dynamic that takes place four centuries later between Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski. While Montaigne, following Aristotle, reserves such an absolute friendship for but one pair of friends, the later variant would impose no such restrictions. Followed to its logical limits, if the thoughts of Montaigne and La Boétie are taken to be at some level inseparable, then Montaigne, having incorporated those of La Boétie, would be still honoring La Boétie even while overtly excising La Boétie's work from his *Essais.* By this logic all the *Essais* would have La Boétie in common, whether or not they actually mention his proper name. It is this possibility of thinking through and as, yet also transcending the dead friend, that is at issue, as we have seen, in Blanchot's writings on Bataille and, as we shall see—and with an even more impersonal twist—in Blanchot's writings on Foucault.

Both in *L'Amitié* and more notably in the later *La Communauté inavouable,* Blanchot uses the work and the person of Bataille as a means of formulating his definition of friendship. Although this definition is articulated in different fashions at different points, it always points to an extreme state, a point of nonconnection or even a form of negativity, as being somehow foundational for friendship. Such a definition is in many respects at odds with Montaigne's model of friendship in "De l'amitié" as a perfect and harmonious smoothness.[14] In the following passage from *La Communauté inavouable,*

Blanchot outlines his conception of friendship not only by citing Bataille but also by appealing to the state of intoxication and to "unworking":

> For Bataille, friendship is a part of "the sovereign operation"; it is not by some whim that [Bataille's] *Le Coupable* has as its first subtitle *L'Amitié;* friendship, it is true, is difficult to define: friendship for oneself all the way to dissolution; friendship of the one for the other, as passage and as affirmation of a continuity that takes off from the necessary discontinuity. But reading—the unworking labor of the work—is not absent from it, though it belongs at times to the vertigo of drunkenness: [citing Bataille] "I had already imbibed much wine. I asked X to read a passage from the book I was carrying around with me and he read it aloud (nobody, to my knowledge, reads with a more hard-edged simplicity, with a more passionate grandeur than he). I was too drunk and no longer remember the exact passage. He himself had drunk as much as I had. It would be a mistake to think that such a reading given by men intoxicated with drink is but a provocative paradox. . . . I believe we are united in this, that we are both open, defenseless—through temptation—to forces of destruction, but not like the reckless, rather like children whom a cowardly naiveté never abandons." . . . The scene Bataille describes to us, whose participants are known to us (but that is of no importance) and which was not destined to be published (though it maintains the cautiousness of a certain incognito: the interlocutor is not named, but he is shown in such a way that his friends may recognize him, without naming him; he represents friendship as much as the friend), is followed (dated on a different day) by this statement: "A god does not busy himself." This not-doing is one of the aspects of the unworking, and friendship, with the reading in drunkenness, is the very form of the unworking community Jean-Luc Nancy has asked us to reflect upon, though it is not permitted to us to stop there.[15]

In this passage, Blanchot presents a network of concepts, all of which function according to a logic of contradiction. Whereas Montaigne's rhetoric of friendship is marked by perfect accord and instant harmony, for Blanchot it is precisely the opposite that sets friendship into motion. There are, as it were, at least two different levels of con-

tradiction in the passage above. The first entails the contradictory notion of the concept expressed, and the second entails the contradictory relationship of that concept to other concepts. We see, for example, both levels of contradiction at work in the phrase "friendship of the one for the other, as passage and as affirmation of a continuity that takes off from the necessary discontinuity." Here the very concept of friendship is based on a "necessary discontinuity." (Although Montaigne's friendship with La Boétie may eventually be read as discontinuous and contradictory, this is not its overt point of departure.) Such a discontinuity would in fact correspond, though in reverse, with the notion that friendship includes the possibility for hatred, a possibility that Montaigne dismisses as belonging to the everyday variety of friendship.

Blanchot's description of friendship also contains a second level of contradiction. Not only is discontinuity constitutive of friendship, but this very discontinuity is juxtaposed in an oxymoronic fashion with continuity itself ("as passage and as affirmation of a continuity that takes off from a necessary discontinuity"). In Blanchot, such a juxtaposition of continuity and discontinuity is not one of dialectical synthesis or resolution, but another form of dialectics in which contradictions are maintained alongside each other in an unaltered fashion.

The next sentence from this passage presents a similar juxtaposition of contradictions: "But reading—the unworking labor of the work—is not absent from it, though it belongs at times to the vertigo of drunkenness." This parenthetical phrase "the unworking labor of the work," will form the central concern of the next chapter, but suffice it to indicate the multiple contradictions contained in this phrase. First, there is the juxtaposition of "unworking" and "labor," which would gesture to a form of labor that is not characterized by work but rather by work's opposite, "unworking" [*désoeuvrement*].[16] Moreover, this oxymoronic combination of "unworking labor" is linked to "the work" itself. Contained within the work, then, is both the work's labor and the undoing of this labor.

To take this one step further, Blanchot emphasizes that this contradictoriness is not in itself contradictory. In other words, that

friendship should be constituted by contradictory sentiments and states of being is not shocking but altogether logical.[17] Blanchot elaborates this idea with reference to a friend who has died (and this friend is implicitly Bataille):[18] "These movements are contradictory only in appearance: 'The one for whom I write' is the one whom one cannot know, he is the unknown, and the relationship with the unknown, even in writing, exposes me to death or finitude, that death which does not have it in it to appease death. What then about friendship? *Friendship: Friendship for the unknown without friends.* Or, moreover, if friendship calls upon the community through writing, it can only except itself (*friendship for the exigency of writing which excludes all friendship*)."[19] The concluding lines of this passage bring out the extreme oppositional qualities contained by friendship, oppositions that are, according to Blanchot, contradictory only in appearance.

Friendship is here defined with respect to the "unknown without friends" and, in the domain of writing, as an exigency to write for a community of friends. Yet friendship is itself excluded by this writerly community. Friendship, like the community, can be constituted by writing, yet this is a writing and a community that excludes both friendship and community.[20] Such extreme paradox is also what is registered in Montaigne's (and Derrida's) reading of Aristotle's statement "O my friends, there is no friend," where the apostrophe to the community of friends is immediately revoked by the statement "there is no friend."[21] Whereas Montaigne views such a formulation as a signpost of a lesser form of friendship that is fraught with tension, for Blanchot this contradictory tension is the very condition of possibility for both friendship and community.

Montaigne and Blanchot nevertheless coincide in viewing friendship as something that is singular, fleeting, and rare. Blanchot links the singularity of friendship to the event of shared and silent reading: "Nocturnal communication, that communication which does not avow itself, which antedates itself and takes its authority only from a non-existing author, opens up upon another form of community, when a small number of friends, each one singular, and with no

forced relationships between them, form it in secret through the silent reading they share, becoming conscious of the exceptional event they are confronted with or dedicated to."[22] Here Blanchot relates the singularity of friendship, not to personal interaction, but rather to a community of silent reading. The friends in question have "no forced relationships between them," and by extension, potentially no personal relation whatsoever. In fact, they need not be just two but can extend to greater plurality.[23] Theirs are textual friendships formed by silent reading. Such a recasting of friendship as something at once singular, plural, personal, and impersonal extends the concept of friendship to generally uncharted realms.

It is in such a realm of impersonality, contradiction, and singularity that I wish to situate each of the five sets of exchanges in this study, each one in a different fashion. While all the exchanges at issue constitute relations of friendship—with varying degrees of interpersonal connection, Montaignian harmony, and Blanchotian contradiction—they do so in different registers. The respective exchanges between Blanchot and Bataille and between Blanchot and Foucault constitute the two extremes of friendship among the various pairs in this study. Blanchot and Bataille were legendary friends in the lineage of Montaigne and La Boétie; and indeed their friendship, like that of the latter pair, enabled the very possibility of theorizing friendship. Blanchot and Foucault, on the other hand, were literary friends in the most impersonal and Blanchotian sense, for they never met, but instead constituted a friendship through reading and commenting on each other's work. As a limit case for the very definition of friendship, the relationship between Blanchot and Foucault serves as an exemplary illustration of the way in which impersonality and contradiction are central to all the exchanges in question.

Blanchot on Foucault

The exchange between Blanchot and Foucault consists primarily of two texts written twenty years apart that have been collected in English as one volume. These are Foucault's 1966 essay on Blanchot

"La Pensée du dehors" [The Thought from Outside] and Blanchot's equally laudatory response *Michel Foucault tel que je l'imagine* [Michel Foucault as I imagine him], written after Foucault's death in 1984.[24] While Foucault's essay will be taken up in what follows, Blanchot's small monograph on Foucault is even more crucial in delineating the impersonal and contradictory aspects of the Blanchot-Foucault exchange. Of particular importance are Blanchot's opening and closing passages. He begins *Michel Foucault tel que je l'imagine* with a dizzying array of personal admissions, contradictions, and non sequiturs:

> A few personal words. Let me say first of all that I had no personal relations with Michel Foucault. I never met him, except one time, in the courtyard of the Sorbonne during the events of May '68, perhaps in June or July (but I was later told he wasn't there), when I addressed a few words to him, he himself unaware of who was speaking to him. . . . (Whatever the detractors of May might say, it was a splendid moment, when anyone could speak to anyone else, anonymously, impersonally, welcomed with no other justification than that of being another person.) It's true that during those extraordinary events I often asked: but why isn't Foucault here? thus granting him his power of attraction and underscoring the empty place he should have been occupying. But I received replies that didn't satisfy me: "He's somewhat reserved," or "He's abroad." But, in fact, there were many foreigners, and even the far-off Japanese were there. Perhaps we may simply have missed each other.[25]

In this somewhat uncharacteristically personal confession,[26] Blanchot brings out the seemingly contradictory configuration of friendship, personal presence, and impersonality: "I never met him, except one time . . . (but I was later told he wasn't there). . . . Perhaps we may simply have missed each other." One cannot even begin to unravel this, and surely this is not what is called for, except perhaps to say, "Some friend he is," or, in another vein, "Ah, now *there's* a friend."

Such contradictions will be taken up presently, but first I would introduce a rival anecdote. In *The Passion of Michel Foucault,* after commenting on Blanchot's renowned reclusiveness and Foucault's at-

traction to the mystique it generated, James Miller adds: "In a touching homage to the faceless author, [Foucault] even turned down an invitation to meet Blanchot over dinner, remarking to Daniel Defert that he knew the writing—and he had no need to know the writer."[27] Such a statement attests to the veritable cult of impersonality that has long surrounded Blanchot. As someone who refuses all public engagements, photographs, and personal contact in the literary world, and has done so now for several decades,[28] Blanchot is one of those rare figures about whom very few personal attributes are known. Unlike Foucault, who, as we shall see in the next chapter, is known for his eyes and his voice, for eminently personal features, Blanchot is known for keeping such knowledge inaccessible.

Such an emphasis on the impersonal is not only one of the hallmarks of Blanchot and his writing, but it is also a potential attribute of friendship itself. Impersonality is something that Blanchot associates with the literary act as such. In *Le Livre à venir,* Blanchot writes of "an impersonal force [*puissance*] which, as an obstacle and as a resource, is at the origin of the literary effort."[29] Blanchot's fiction attests to just this force of impersonality—many of the *récits* involve scenarios where two strangers engage in the most intimate of relations with each other, frequently on both a physical and a spiritual level, yet in spite of this—or because of this—divulge to one another almost no personal details. The impersonality that was a necessary condition of their meeting seems to enable intimacies that they had never thought possible. Such is the case in *Au moment voulu* [When the Time Comes], where the narrator somewhat randomly enters the Paris apartment of Judith, an acquaintance of his (though it is never quite clear how well and in what context they were previously acquainted), and installs himself there indefinitely. (Most remarkably, this fact of his suddenly appearing and then not leaving seems to be nothing that exceptional from the perspective of any of the characters.)[30] Once established in Judith's apartment, the narrator has almost no interaction with Judith but instead enters into an intense relationship with her roommate, Claudia. That Claudia is Scandinavian and a singer is all that the reader (and the narrator too, it would

seem) knows about her, while even less is known about Judith and the narrator. After his first encounters with Claudia, the narrator comments on the freedom that the impersonality and reserve between them enables. Reflecting on their relationship, the narrator notes "the discretion with which all this happened . . . and yet still veiled by an impersonal air; imperceptibly, she had placed a feeling of reserve between us that left her and left me much freer than any wall."[31] Impersonality, in the Blanchotian sensibility, is in no way a negative characteristic but is the very force that opens up new spaces of freedom and new forms of relation between beings. One such potentially novel form of relation is the very idea of impersonal friendship.

Both Derrida and Reda Bensmaïa use Blanchotian formulations in writing of the impersonal aspect of friendship. In *Politiques de l'amitié,* just after discussing the friendship between Blanchot and Bataille, Derrida links friendship with "ahumanity," when he writes of "thinking and living the gentle rigor of friendship, the law of friendship as the experience of a certain ahumanity, in absolute separation, on this or that side of the commerce of gods and men."[32] This notion of friendship as absolute separation operates in two distinct ways. First, and more literally, friendship may be recognized—as in the cases of Montaigne and La Boétie, Blanchot and Bataille, Blanchot and Foucault, and Deleuze and Foucault—across the absolute separation of death. In this sense, friendship is ahuman because one of the friends is no longer human, is no longer living. We will return to the question of friendship and death, but here the second form of absolute separation is more nearly at issue. This second and more radical form is the separation between two beings who are living and present to each other. Such a form of impersonal and living separation is one of the central concerns in all of Blanchot's fiction, and beyond this, it serves as the very condition of possibility for friendship in Blanchot's otherworldly universe.

Reda Bensmaïa devotes the concluding section of *The Barthes Effect: The Essay as Reflective Text* to the question of friendship in the work of Roland Barthes. As with Blanchot and Derrida, Bensmaïa

reads friendship in Barthes (particularly in *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes*) as something more akin to a formal structure than a personal affect: " 'Friendship' is referred to a *topic* where henceforth the substitutive character of the relation—one might almost say its 'formal' character—gains the upper hand: what should be recognized now is essentially the 'circulation' of the figures, the impersonal exchange of phantasms, outside affectivity properly so-called."[33] Here again, friendship is not so much about personality and affect as it is about "the impersonal exchange of phantasms."

This later formulation (which will be taken up in chapter six) is indebted to Klossowski and his concept of the disembodied phantasm (the thing-in-itself in the Klossowskian lexicon, the purest possible entity, one that goes beyond the realm of the personal, and of which everything else is a simulation). This formulation underscores the way in which a certain strain of French thought—one that includes all the thinkers in this study and others, such as Derrida and Barthes, besides—is preoccupied simultaneously with the most personal and interpersonal kinds of topics (friendship, love, community, etc.) *and* with the most impersonal of approaches to these topics. This is a tension that underlies the genre of the laudatory philosophical essay. While writing philosophical encomia to a friend would appear to be the most excessively personal of gestures, so much so that it has been granted little serious scholarly consideration by contemporary philosophers, this mode is used by the thinkers in question as a means of signaling all that is absolutely *impersonal* about the literary or philosophical work in question. In this fashion, friendship itself becomes a dynamic of nonconnection and impersonality rather than one of affective plenitude.

As opposed to a notion of friendship as affective plenitude, Blanchot, Derrida, and Pierre Macherey link friendship with the registers of silence, disproportion, and lack. Yet these registers are not without their own form of negative plenitude. Following from the centrality of silence to the exchanges between Bataille and Blanchot, it is not surprising that Blanchot, in his reading of Foucault, signals silence in an affirmative fashion. Moreover, he brings out the affirmative con-

tradictions inherent in silence: "Foucault, who wrote abundantly, was a silent being: even more, he was compulsive in keeping his silence when benevolent or malevolent questioners asked him to explain himself."[34] Blanchot, who fits this description perhaps better than Foucault, recognizes the essential silence in a man who, unlike himself, was known for giving interviews, for his political engagement, for his role as a teacher—in short, for his public presence. In this sense, silence—or impersonality—does not have to be the defining feature of a thinker (as it is for Blanchot) for it to nonetheless take on significance in an analysis of that thinker's work. Silence can permeate the work and the person without its being manifested openly (as in the case of Foucault). Derrida extends such a reading of silence by explicitly linking it to friendship. He writes that "friendship does not keep silence, it is kept by silence."[35] Such a reversal between the active "keeping" and the passive "being kept" underscores that silence, like impersonality, is a defining rather than an incidental feature of friendship.

In a similar fashion, Derrida defines friendship as being inherently disproportionate and imbalanced: " 'Good friendship' takes disproportion as a given. It exacts a certain rupture of reciprocity or egality, and also the interruption of all fusion or confusion between you and me."[36] While all the exchanges in this study entail relations of silence and disproportion and thus might be categorized as modes of friendship, this disproportion does not always coincide with "the interruption of all fusion or confusion between you and me." As we have seen with respect to Bataille and Blanchot, and as we shall see with respect to Foucault and Deleuze and then with Deleuze and Klossowski, disproportion and "fusion or confusion" are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Indeed, it is often hard in these exchanges to distinguish where the work of one thinker ends and that of the other begins; nonetheless, all these exchanges entail great disproportion. Moreover, this very reading of Blanchot and Foucault employs Derrida, and specifically Derrida's *Politiques de l'amitié,* as an agent of fusion and confusion. Through Derrida's work on friendship, the exchanges between Blanchot and Foucault are brought together under the aegis of

friendship, while at the same time the boundary between the two thinkers is blurred and confused.

If silence and disproportion would seem to be negative characteristics, then lack is certainly all the more so. Yet in a striking analysis of the difference between friendship and love in Plato's *Lysis,* Pierre Macherey situates friendship as both encompassing lack and simultaneously leaving no room for negativity. While in friendship, as in love, the absence of the loved object would cause a feeling of lack, the lack would be felt according to different registers in friendship than in love. Macherey depicts love as a vertical relationship where the lack of the loved object entails a general absence, a great desire for the lost object, and thus an overall negativity. Friendship, on the other hand, is a horizontal structure where affective qualities are continually displaced and where there is an absence of desire and thus no room for negativity.[37] Without following the specifics of Macherey's argument, what is at issue is the very possibility for lack without negativity that Macherey's vision of friendship entails, a lack without negativity that is not contradictory. Through these complementary frameworks of friendship as silence, disproportion, and lack, we are able to place the impersonal exchanges of Blanchot and Foucault under the rubric of friendship and to see in this space of impersonality, silence, and lack another form of plenitude that goes beyond the Montaignian rhetoric of harmonious plenitude.

Foucault on Blanchot

So far we have applied a Blanchotian definition of friendship to the laudatory exchanges between Blanchot and Foucault. Could these exchanges be situated within a Foucauldian framework as well? In what follows, I will situate friendship within the context of the Foucauldian concepts of the "care of the self," "thought from the outside," and the "companion" and will point out how these concepts underscore and extend the Blanchotian and Derridean conceptions of friendship.

In his reading of friendship in Barthes, Bensmaïa highlights the

"negative" qualities of friendship while distancing them from the "care of the self." He writes that, in Barthes, " 'friendship' becomes the motif of a reflection that, paradoxically, focuses less on what friendship is supposed to bring to shared experience, than on how it alienates me, distances me from myself and makes me defer, as it were, the moment of taking care of myself."[38] Friendship, then, would not only reflect a relation of impersonality with the other, but beyond this, a fundamental alienation and separation from the self, one that would prevent a proper caretaking of the self. How is such a statement to be reconciled with Foucault's emphasis on the care of the self in his later writings—and with the set of techniques he outlines for contemporary self-caretaking, techniques modeled primarily on examples taken from ancient Rome and Greece? Does the proper care of the self allow room for friendship? While, as Bensmaïa notes, the care of the self seems at odds with a delirious form of friendship that would lead to self-dissolution (such as that outlined by Blanchot in *La Communauté inavouable*), self-caretaking can nonetheless be grounded in a different form of friendship, one that draws its energy from restraint rather than from delirium.

In *Technologies of the Self,* Foucault appeals to Pliny and Seneca as models for linking the care of the self with a restrained form of friendship. He shows how friends or small acts of friendship are necessary for self-caretaking:

> Pliny advises a friend to set aside a few moments a day, or several weeks or months, for a retreat into himself. This was an active leisure—to study, to read, to prepare for misfortune or death. It was a meditation and a preparation.
>
> Writing was also important in the culture of taking care of oneself. One of the main features of taking care involved taking notes on oneself to be reread, writing treatises and letters to friends to help them, and keeping notebooks in order to reactivate for oneself the truths one needed. Seneca's letters are an example of this self-exercise.[39]

In this passage, the figure of the friend comes in at two important points. First, Pliny's remarks on taking care of the self are presented

as advice to a friend. It is only through this framing device, through an address to the friend, that Pliny's remarks are available in the first place. In the second paragraph, the friend figures as part of the process of taking care of the self. In addition to taking notes on oneself, self-care also entails "writing treatises and letters to friends to help them." Just as Pliny's remarks on self-caretaking are in the form of an address to a friend, so too is such an address also a form of self-caretaking in its own right. In this way, Foucault's late interest in the care of the self goes hand in hand with an attentiveness to the friend and to friendship. Such an attention to friendship is, however, presented by Foucault in a tone of reserve and restraint, a tone that differs markedly from Blanchot and Derrida's more apocalyptic appraisal of the extreme qualities of friendship (and that differs, as we shall see in the chapter that follows, from Foucault's excessive and even outlandish laudatory remarks about Deleuze).

Foucault's tone in his later writings is markedly different from that of his earlier periods, but both in their fashion allow for a reflection on friendship. Though he does not address friendship as such in his 1966 essay on Blanchot, Foucault's tone in extolling Blanchot is strikingly parallel to Blanchot's laudatory tone with respect to Bataille in *L'Amitié* and *La Communauté inavouable*. This comes out most notably in Foucault's discussion of "thought from the outside," a register in which he locates Blanchot's thought. Such a register, like friendship for Blanchot and Derrida, is marked by traits such as silence and nothingness that would appear as negativities: Foucault associates "thought from the outside" with "the silence beyond all language and the nothingness beyond all being"[40] and traces it as far back as Pseudo-Dionysius and the mystical texts of Christianity. He charts its recurrence in Sade, Hölderlin, Nietzsche, and Mallarmé.[41] Finally, he hails this "thought from the outside" as integral to many of the key figures and concepts in the present study. I quote at length:

> The same experience of thought from the outside . . . resurfaced . . . in Artaud, when all of discursive language is constrained to come undone in the violence of the body and the cry, and when thought, forsaking the wordy interiority of consciousness, be-

> comes a material energy, the suffering of the flesh, the persecution and rending of the subject itself; and in Bataille, when thought ceases to be the discourse of contradiction or the unconscious, becoming the discourse of the limit, of ruptured subjectivity, transgression; and in Klossowski, with the experience of the double, of the exteriority of simulacra, of the insane theatrical multiplication of the Self.
>
> Blanchot is perhaps more than just another witness to this thought. So far has he withdrawn into the manifestation of his work, so completely is he, not hidden by his texts, but absent from their existence and absent by virtue of the marvelous force of their existence, that for us he is that thought itself—its real, absolutely distant shimmering invisible presence, its inevitable law, its calm infinite, measured strength.[42]

Here Foucault brings together the Bataillean limit, the Klossowskian simulacrum, and above all, Blanchot, as a set of material energies that constitute "thought from the outside." It is in this sense that the dinner-party anecdote, whether accurate or not, encapsulates the singular way in which Blanchot *is* his work (thus there is no need to encounter Blanchot the man) by also being "absent from [his texts'] existence and absent by virtue of the marvelous force of their existence." This characterization of thought as a material energy, one that eschews the boundaries of the person[43] but is nonetheless singular, almost perfectly mirrors Blanchot's definition of friendship. Like friendship, "thought from the outside" entails a noncontradictory existing together of presence and absence: personhood and subjectivity are absent, yet a material energy of thought is excessively present. Such a coexistence of the absence of the person and the presence of thought as materiality is indeed the hallmark of the group of thinkers that Foucault has singled out.

Since Deleuze is the only thinker in this study not explicitly cited by Foucault in the above passage, it is interesting to note the way Deleuze nonetheless provides a crucial link between Blanchotian friendship and Foucauldian "thought from the outside." In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Félix Guattari link friendship to thought via the breakdown of subjectivity: "This is not two friends who engage

in thought; rather, it is thought itself that requires the thinker to be a friend so that thought is divided up within itself and can be exercised. It is thought itself which requires this division of thought between friends."[44] Here, Deleuze and Guattari seem to be saying that thought is not produced as the result of two friends (or two philosophers) coming together, but that it is thought and the mutations of thought that produce friends. In this sense, the material energy of "thought from the outside" is the impetus that leads to friendship, but a friendship that is itself indistinguishable from the very material energy that instigates it. Thought from the outside thus produces and incorporates friendship in its wake.

Using Blanchot as the model, Deleuze and Guattari delineate this relationship between friendship and thought as one where friends act as "conceptual personae" in the realm of thought: "When again today Maurice Blanchot, one of the rare thinkers to consider the meaning of the word *friend* in philosophy, takes up this question internal to the conditions of thought as such, does he not once more introduce new conceptual personae into the heart of the purest Thought?"[45] It is as "conceptual personae" that Blanchot and Foucault relate to each other, and following from this, as friends. In this sense, both the friend and the conceptual persona are formed in the realm of thought. Yet this thought is not a realm of pure spirit but contains within it material and even bodily forces.[46] The Blanchotian figure of the friend, as well as the Deleuze-Guattarian notion of conceptual personae, are the products of singular combinations of "thought from the outside," and the Blanchot-Foucault encounter is another such configuration.

In addition to "care of the self" and "thought from the outside," there is a third Foucauldian concept that pertains to the question of friendship. Although Foucault does not use the term *friendship* as such in his essay on Blanchot (this term will surface in the last two volumes of *L'Histoire de la sexualité*), he does speak of the "companion." According to Foucault's characterization, the companion also belongs to that realm of noncontradiction between the impersonality of absence and excessively personal plenitude. Foucault links the compan-

ion to unbearable familiarity: "The companion acts both as a demand to which one is never equal and a weight of which one would like to rid oneself. One is irretrievably bound to the companion with a familiarity that is hard to bear; yet one must draw still closer to him and create a bond with him different from the absence of ties that attaches one to him through the faceless form of absence."[47]

Instead of embodying an explicit dynamic of presence and absence, Foucault's figure of the companion operates according to a simultaneous law of attraction and repulsion—one is drawn to the companion irresistibly, yet the companion is consummately unbearable. Is it irresistible because unbearable? Unbearable because irresistible? The forces of irresistibility and unbearableness, of attraction and repulsion, are difficult if not impossible to untangle. As the locus of the opposing forces of attraction and repulsion, the companion is comparable to Montaigne's everyday friend, the one to whom Aristotle's dictum "O my friends, there is no friend" applies. By extension, then, the companion is also comparable to Blanchot's and to Derrida's concept of the friend.

It is therefore not surprising that the refrain "O my friends, there is no friend" haunts both Derrida and Blanchot. This refrain serves as the punctum or shibboleth for Derrida's *Politiques de l'amitié,* as it introduces nearly every chapter in the book. Through a series of readings that range from Aristotle to Nietzsche to Blanchot to Karl Schmitt[48] and his distinction between the friend and the enemy, Derrida incorporates the refrain "O my friends, there is no friend" at every twist and turn. As with Foucault's companion, Derrida's friendship is marked by the constant interplay of extreme states of repulsion and attraction. In a shorter and earlier English language version of *Politiques de l'amitié,* Derrida evokes "the silent unfolding of that strange violence which has for so long insinuated itself into the origin of the most innocent experiences of friendship or justice."[49] Such a violence permeates the refrain "O my friend, there is no friend," where there is at once the apostrophic attraction to the one(s) addressed ("O my friends") and the immediate, shocking repulsion of the address itself—"there is no friend." In other words, the form

beckons the other, while the content pushes the other away. Derrida charts the contradictory movements of this refrain as follows:

> Let us listen once again to Montaigne listening to Aristotle listening to the Other, but let us translate and interpret him as well: "O my friends, there is no friend." The painful and plaintive irony of the address also states the certitude of a strange affirmation. The phrase springs forth like a sort of *apostrophe;* in effect, someone is turning toward his friends, "O my friends . . . ,' but the apostrophe carries within it a predicative proposition, it envelops an indicative declaration. Ascertaining a fact, it also utters a general truth: "there is no friend." The general truth of the *fact* would seem to contradict, *in the act,* the very possibility of the apostrophe, the possibility of its being serious: there must indeed be friends in order for me to address myself to them in this way, if only so as to say to them, "there is no friend."[50]

Here, the fact that "there is no friend" would *seem* to contradict the apostrophe "O my friends," would *seem* to undermine the possibility of its being serious. Yet this contradictory interplay is serious, or at least can be, and it is this seriousness that resounds from Blanchot's remark about Foucault—"I never met him, except one time . . . (but I was later told he wasn't there). . . . Perhaps we may simply have missed each other."

Derrida goes on to unravel the seemingly contradictory nature of this refrain, noting that it has never been stated that "there is no friendship,"[51] that in fact friendship stands as a sort of future ideal that is solicited by an apostrophe that supposes an anterior—or future anterior—relationship: "Friendship is never a given in the present; it belongs to the experience of waiting, of promise, or of engagement. Its discourse is that of prayer, and at stake there is what responsibility opens to the future. . . . Behind the logical game of contradiction or paradox, perhaps the 'O my friends, there is no friend' signifies first and last this overturning of the present by the undeniable future anterior which would be the very movement and time of friendship."[52] Thus, "O my friends, there is no friend" gains its force by catching us at that place where temporal constructs can

only be contradictory—to hail a friend supposes a past state of friendship yet also the expectation of its future continuity; but the declaration "there is no friend" bespeaks the pain of actually having *had* a friend and having come to realize that this was but a deception, that perhaps there was never a friend to begin with. That these two modes might exist together indicates that friendship, like love, carries with it the potential for great pain and at the same time the quiet promise of "that which will have been."

Friendship Beyond Death

Thus far we have attributed the citation of "O my friends, there is no friend" to Montaigne and Derrida. It so happens that the final section of Blanchot's *Michel Foucault tel que je l'imagine* is entitled "O mes amis" [O my friends]. Here, Blanchot addresses Foucault's turn, in the later volumes of *The History of Sexuality,* to models from antiquity and remarks on the change of tone in these volumes, how they are impersonal, calm, not fueled by passion.[53] Finally, in the closing lines, Blanchot notes Foucault's late attention to friendship:

> And it was thus [Foucault] would be tempted to call on the ancients for a revalorization of the practices of friendship, which, although never lost, have not again recaptured, except for a few of us, their exalted virtue. . . . Friendship was perhaps promised to Foucault as a posthumous gift, beyond passions, beyond problems of thought, beyond the danger of life he experienced more for others than for himself. In bearing witness to a work demanding study (unprejudiced reading) rather than praise, I believe I am remaining faithful, however awkwardly, to the intellectual friendship that his death, so painful for me, today allows me to declare to him: while I recall the words attributed by Diogenes Laertes to Aristotle: "O my friends, there is no friend."[54]

Here Blanchot links friendship explicitly to death, signals it as "something promised to Foucault as a posthumous gift." Friendship, then, is not confined by the barriers between life and death. It does not exist solely as a living sentiment but, in certain cases, draws much

of its force from death. Blanchot, as not only this passage but all of *La Communauté inavouable* attests, is the preeminent posthumous friend of both Bataille and Foucault (and in what follows, Deleuze is also Foucault's posthumous friend). Yet the difference between these configurations is that Blanchot was Bataille's friend while he was still living (and the same for Deleuze and Foucault—and for Montaigne and La Boétie as well), whereas Blanchot befriended Foucault only in death, only as a gift of death.[55] And it is precisely because such grounds for friendship are so precarious, so impersonal, and so contestable that I wish to hold up Blanchot and Foucault as the extreme model of friendship.

In conclusion, let us turn once again to Derrida and to his reading of friendship alongside death, and subsequently to his reading of Blanchot's conclusion to *Michel Foucault tel que je l'imagine.* Derrida views any great friendship as being intimately connected with death and its attendant spectrality. He writes that "no great discourse on friendship . . . will have ever escaped from the great rhetoric of *epitáphios,* and thus from some transfixed celebration of spectrality, at once fervent and already caught by the cadaverous or petrified coldness of its inscription, of the becoming-*epitaph* of the oration. The great examples that await us, from Montaigne to Blanchot, will not convince us of the contrary."[56] While all the great examples of friendship indeed contain death or the potential of death as an integral component, the friendship of Blanchot and Foucault has no personal basis *but* death. Yet the force of the impersonal energy involved is something that goes beyond death—it is so impersonal that even the advent of death cannot fully repersonalize it.

In his intricate reading of Blanchot's conclusion, Derrida reiterates the inextricable connection between friendship and death: "Thanks be given to death. It is *thanks* to death that friendship can be declared. Never before, never otherwise."[57] Yet, through a close reading of Blanchot's punctuation, and particularly his penultimate colon, the one that awkwardly introduces the quotation from Aristotle ("allows me to declare to him: *while* I recall the words attributed by Diogenes Laertes to Aristotle: 'O my friends, there is no friend' " [my

emphasis]), Derrida would seem to gesture to the possibility that death is not as central to friendship as it might otherwise seem. Derrida glosses Blanchot's unusual punctuation as follows:

> The unbelievable audacity of a "while" [tandis que], after a colon, opens up a lone subordinate clause which suspends the whole declaration in the *epokhe* of this atemporal time that goes along with mourning, but also nullifies in advance all that could be said in this statement and declared in this declaration. Colon: has an act of punctuation ever thus held out a veil of mourning, suspending even the logical progression, only letting the contiguity appear, the simultaneity of two merely juxtaposed temporal orders, with no internal relation to each other? Will one ever have punctuated with more rigor, economy, reserve, even leaving open the hypothesis—but we will not linger here—that there, perhaps, no one is around any longer for anyone, and that this is indeed death, this dying of which Blanchot so frequently and profoundly complained, not that it is fatal but that it remains impossible.[58]

Such a reading points to the possibility that death exists only according to one temporal order in which death is a singular event that inaugurates something else (such as friendship). It would be tempting to place the friendship between Blanchot and Foucault under just such a temporality, where death serves as the catalyst for friendship since there was no actual friendship in life. Yet such an analysis gives death all the credit, makes it the singular feature of the friendship between Blanchot and Foucault. What if, by contrast, we examine death in relation to the second temporal order that Derrida evokes? This is a temporal order where death is a nonevent—it is not fatal but rather impossible or insignificant. In this second temporality, death would not constitute friendship's singularity, but rather the other way around: friendship would be the singular event in itself, so much so that death would not significantly alter it. Such a reading might seem plausible in relation to a friendship that was already well established during the lifetimes of the friends in question, but it becomes much more audacious when the friendship, such as that between Blanchot and Foucault, is one of pure lived impersonality.

Yet it is this that I want to suggest—that in its singular literary impersonality, the friendship between Blanchot and Foucault has no need even for death, that it is always constitutionally beyond death. On such a reading—and it applies as well to the other groupings of laudatory exchanges that are also marked by the death of one of the interlocutors—death would, of course, be significant, but it would not be singular. Such singularity is here reserved for friendship and, in the second encounter staged around the death of Foucault (that between Deleuze and Foucault), for the absence of work.

4 *Madness and Repetition*

The Absence of Work in Deleuze, Foucault, and Jacques Martin

These pages are dedicated to the memory of Jacques Martin, the friend who, in the most terrible ordeal, alone discovered the road to Marx's philosophy—and guided me onto it. —*Louis Althusser*

This dedication, which prefaces Louis Althusser's *For Marx,*[1] appeared two years after the suicide of Jacques Martin in 1963. Jacques Martin, who was between Althusser and Foucault at the Ecole Normale Supérieure—four years younger than Althusser and four years older than Foucault—appears to have been an enigmatic and exceedingly brilliant man. In Althusser's words, he was "a sad yet warm homosexual, even in the distance of his latent schizophrenia, an incomparable friend."[2] Aside from short prefaces to his translations from the German and a highly acclaimed Mémoire de DES on the notion of the individual in Hegel, Jacques Martin produced no work and ceased to advance in the French educational system, often relying on money loaned to him by Althusser and Foucault for his very subsistence.[3] Preoccupied with the idea of madness, Martin was apparently the first to equate madness with the absence of work ("l'absence d'oeuvre"), an association that was taken up by both Althusser and Foucault.

Althusser makes frequent and poignant references to Martin in his autobiographical work *L'Avenir dure longtemps* [The future lasts forever].[4] This work is punctuated with the refrain "thanks to Jacques Martin."[5] It is Martin to whom Althusser owes his coming to philos-

ophy, and in particular, his coming to Marx. He writes, "the only one who gave me an idea (and a true one) about philosophy was Martin. Thanks to him, I was able to have an overall strategic idea of the philosophical situation, and several absolutely essential theoretical landmarks for getting my *bearings* in it."[6] Althusser credits Martin with more than bringing him to philosophy—according to Althusser, it is Martin who teaches him how to *think,* and to think otherwise: "His was the sharpest mind I ever encountered, implacable like a lawyer, meticulous like an addition, and endowed with a macabre sense of humor that all the priests couldn't stand. In any case, he taught me to think, and especially that one could think otherwise than what our teachers claimed. Without him, I would never have strung two ideas together."[7]

Foucault's references to Martin are much less explicit.[8] In fact, they are perhaps best characterized in a sense that is altogether impersonal, as an "effect" of Martin. It is an effect that follows shortly upon Martin's suicide, an effect marked by a proliferation of work. In 1963 Foucault published *Raymond Roussel* and *Naissance de la clinique,*[9] and in 1964 a short essay entitled "La Folie, l'absence d'oeuvre."[10] In this piece, which appeared three years after the publication of *Folie et déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique,* Foucault rearticulates the history of madness in terms of a double silencing, or double language: "Since Freud, Western madness has become a non-language because it has become a double language (a language that only exists in this speech, a speech that only says its language)—which is to say a matrix of language that, strictly speaking, says nothing. Fold of the spoken which is an absence of work."[11] In this way, madness is paradoxically and tautologically doubled or absent: it is only decipherable in terms of a given set of articulations, and these articulations can only signify madness. All the terms fold perfectly back against each other and net a resounding absence—and not just an absence, but *the absence of work.* This, then, marks the tautology from which work, poetic or otherwise, is logically impossible, since whatever is produced only refers back to an originary madness, and that madness is the all-encompassing sign for anything that may arise from it.

The very concept of "work" is thereby bound up in the logic of the vicious circle. Foucault continues:

> Discovered as a language fallen silent in its self-superposition, madness neither displays nor narrates the birth of a work . . . ; it denotes the empty form from where this work comes, that is, the place from where it never ceases to be absent, where one will never find it because it is never found there. There in this pale region, in this essential hiding place, the twin incompatibility of work and madness is revealed; it is the blind spot of each of their possibilities and of their mutual exclusion. But since Raymond Roussel, since Artaud, it is equally the place where language and literature approach each other.[12]

Here, Foucault would seem to isolate an exception to this vicious circle of madness and absence of work, an exception to be found in certain literary articulations of madness (or certain works by what *were to have been* madmen). Much has been written of the relative importance of "literature" to Foucault, his attempts in the early writings to give it, as well as madness, a sort of essence, and his subsequent (though contestable) repudiation of this.[13] Such a line of inquiry, albeit illuminating, is not directly at issue here. It is not the purpose of this project to locate and distill those sites where the utter futility of the creative effort—whether through madness, sterility, or what have you—is captured poetically in the fullness of its absence,[14] but rather to look at the apparatus of capture itself. That is, this is about finding not plenitude in the expression of nothingness, but nothingness in the plenitude of expression.

My aim, then, is to map out this nothingness, or this absence of work, in what would paradoxically appear as a vast and consummately repetitive outpouring of work. Such an outpouring occurs in and around Foucault (and, in what follows, in and around Deleuze-Foucault) in the guise of a relentless doubling structure. This doubling takes form on many layers and levels, some of which mercilessly overlap. Two years after *Folie et déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique,* Foucault, as mentioned above, published two works, *Raymond Roussel*[15] and *Naissance de la clinique,* both of which explore the dou-

ble structure of visibility, how death and language work to make what is already visible—yet hidden—doubly visible. In "Le Mot de Dieu: 'Je suis mort' " [The Word of God: "I am dead"], Denis Hollier delineates the doubling effect of these two works:

> It has not been noted to what extent *Roussel* and *Naissance de la clinique* are twin books. Each is organized around the same main argument: death as the key to reading. It was the post-suicidal publication of *Comment j'ai écrit certains de mes livres* that made Roussel's oeuvre readable: the posthumous text made the enormous lesion constituting the work's secret nervure appear. With the transformation that Bichat's anatomopathology makes perceptible to the medical gaze, *Naissance de la clinique* focuses on another kind of posthumous revelation: the lesions discovered on the cadaver thanks to autopsy retrospectively give away the code to the illness' symptoms.[16]

Not only is there a doubling structure between *Roussel* and *Naissance de la clinique,* but *Roussel* and the later *L'Archéologie du savoir*[17] have been seen as double books. In "Vers la fiction" [Toward fiction], Raymond Bellour remarks on the parallel attention to "method" in these two books, describing the book on Roussel as Foucault's "first book on method, a kind of first version of *L'Archéologie du savoir.*"[18] Deleuze echoes this when he says that "Foucault's book on Roussel (1963) is already like the poetic and comic version of the theory of statements that Foucault establishes in *The Archaeology* (1969)."[19] And, to add content to form, the question of the double is *the* question of Foucault's *Roussel* where, for example, he explores the fantastical disjunctions between two sentences that double each other except for one letter.[20] In explicating, among other works, Roussel's verse novel *La Doublure* [The lining],[21] Foucault's very language resonates with the trill of the double: "lining unlined, there is no longer anything but a silence, a look, slow motion gestures that unfold in the empty space beneath the masks"; or "tear that unlines the double and immediately restores it to its marvelous unity"; or "it is a question of the same figure of a language split in two, inside of which a visible scene, produced by this distance's single call, takes up its

abode"; and, finally, "this gentle shadow that makes things visible from beneath their surface and their mask and allows one to speak about them, isn't this from their birth, the proximity of death, of death that unlines the world like the peeling of fruit?"[22]

This doubling that Foucault reads in Roussel is linked all at once to silence, to language, and to death. It is about the silence that is the mirror, or double, of language touched by death, the silence that is both the motor force and the product of an excess of writing that follows upon a death. It is a silence made visible in its opposite, a ceaseless flow of language—as we have seen with respect to Bataille, Blanchot, and des Forêts's *Le Bavard.* And this is a language that both says *nothing* and *signals the unnamable.* As Foucault writes in the conclusion of "La Folie, l'absence d'oeuvre," "[F]ar from the pathological, from the direction of language, there where enfoldings occur with still nothing said, an experience is being born where our thought is at stake; its imminence, already visible but absolutely empty, cannot yet be named."[23] This visible yet unnamable imminence is the madness of language that says nothing, language doubled or repeated to the point that it cannot but say nothing.

It is this structure of the unnamable as repetition, which is also the structure of the double, that haunts the ongoing conversation between Deleuze and Foucault. This is a conversation that started officially in 1962, the year of their meeting, and has continued, albeit fitfully, through and beyond Deleuze's *Foucault,*[24] published in 1986, two years after Foucault's death. This is a conversation marked by extraordinary encomium and uncanny repetition, one that defies biographical explanation or theoretical *mise-en-abîme.* That is, it is insufficient either to decipher it as a misplaced biographical indicator or to delineate the way in which the structure and nature of the exchange mirrors exactly what is being talked about (how such an exchange, to borrow terms from Foucault and Deleuze, is itself a preeminent "event," "diagram," or process of "subjectivation"). Rather, it is with a view to mapping out the supreme impasse, or disjunction, in such an either-or logic that I proceed. For indeed both interpreta-

tions *work* and *do not work,* and this in every sense of the word, in every madness of trying to equate excessive work with absence of work.

Deleuze on Foucault

As Deleuze was later to recount when asked when and where he met Foucault, "One remembers a gesture or laughter more than dates." But then he adds, "I met him around 1962, when he was finishing the writing of *Raymond Roussel* and *Naissance de la clinique.*"[25] So it is the mark of writing, the already-doubled structure of *Raymond Roussel* and *Naissance de la clinique,* that sets off the otherwise gestural language of the laugh, of the presence. It is this ever-overlapping yet nonrelational[26] doubling of the trace of the person with the beautifully transcendent evocations of impersonal thought that serve as the signposts of the ongoing conversation between Deleuze and Foucault. That is, in the highly laudatory exchanges between Deleuze and Foucault, there is an odd copresence of that which would indicate a perfectly hermetic philosophical system and that which would rather outlandishly disrupt it.

One such visibly perfect *mise-en-abîme* structure is that of the double itself. When asked why he published a book on Foucault just after his death, Deleuze evokes the importance of the double in Foucault: "This is not a work of mourning, non-mourning calls for even more work. If my book might be still something else, I would appeal to a constant notion in Foucault, that of the double. Foucault is haunted by the double, including in the alterity peculiar to the double. I wanted to extract a double from Foucault, in the sense that he imparted to this word: repetition, lining, return of the same, tear, imperceptible difference, unlining, and mortal fissure."[27] In this way, Deleuze not only signals the obsession with doubling in Foucault but also suggests that his own text will extract, if not be, the double of Foucault's. In fact, Deleuze's *Foucault*—which represents a compilation of pieces published on Foucault during his lifetime, pieces written after Foucault's death, and course lectures devoted to Foucault—

might be hailed as a more concise, exhaustive, and thorough doubling of Foucault than Foucault himself. As James Miller puts it, "If any French thinker of his generation grasped the implications of Foucault's singular genius—including his unrelenting preoccupation with suicide and death—it was surely Gilles Deleuze."[28] It seems that Deleuze, in mirroring or doubling Foucault, has indeed repeated Foucault's preoccupation with the double.

Coexisting with this repetition is a mysteriously personal and gestural evocation of the double in its specific relation to Foucault's death. In another 1986 interview, Deleuze responds as follows to Claire Parnet's question regarding the spirit in which the Foucault book was written: "I felt a genuine need to write this book. When someone whom one loves and admires dies, one sometimes has a need to make a sketch of him. Not to glorify him, even less to defend him, not for memory, but rather for drawing this ultimate resemblance that can only come from his death, and which makes one say 'that's he.' A mask, or what he himself called a double, a lining."[29] With this disarmingly candid remark, Deleuze seems resolutely outside the *mise-en-abîme* logic. In evoking the death of a loved one, and the eminently personified notion of announcing "that's he" [c'est lui], Deleuze conjures up a Foucault-as-presence, one that is entirely part of the "textual" Foucault who is haunted by the double yet also somehow beyond it. It is not at all that these two Foucaults, the impersonal and the personal, are mutually exclusive, but that they are slightly displaced, almost imperceptibly doubled. Such a displacement is illustrated by Giorgio Agamben's description of Eden and Gehenna in *The Coming Community:*

> According to the Talmud, two places are reserved for each person, one in Eden and the other in Gehenna. The just person, after being found innocent, receives a place in Eden plus that of a neighbor who was damned. The unjust person, after being judged guilty, receives a place in hell plus that of a neighbor who was saved. Thus the Bible says of the just, "In their land they receive double," and of the unjust, "Destroy them with a double destruction." . . . In the topology of this Haggadah of the Talmud, the es-

> sential element is not so much the cartographic distinction between Eden and Gehenna, but rather the adjacent place that each person inevitably receives.[30]

The impersonal/personal displacement in Deleuze's evocations of Foucault could be thought along the lines of a doubling of place. Here it is as if two places have been reserved; because their place-markers must have a name, they are both called Foucault. Neither is exactly a misnomer, yet the one is by definition unnamable, while this one's adjacent neighbor, by doubling it and thereby exacting a title, betrays the unnamability with a proper name, Foucault.

Such a displacement is played out along other axes as well. Deleuze repeatedly emphasizes the impersonal aspects of style, how in a great writer, style is a mode of existence and is not bound up with the personal:

> Style, in a great writer, is always also a style of life, not at all something personal, but the invention of a possibility of life, of a mode of existence. It's funny how it is sometimes said that philosophers have no style, or that they write badly. This must be because they are not read. In France alone, Descartes, Malebranche, Maine de Biran, Bergson, even Auguste Comte with his Balzacian side, are stylists. And Foucault also joins in this lineage, he is a great stylist. With him the concept takes on rhythmical value, or counterpoint, as in the curious dialogues with himself with which he ends some of his books. His syntax gathers reflections, sparklings of the visible, but also writhes like a lash, folds and unfolds, or cracks in time to the statements.[31]

It is remarkable how Deleuze's own style, his own "mode of existence" is, if anything, only heightened when he writes—or speaks—of Foucault. All that Deleuze so beautifully evokes in Foucault is certainly part and parcel of his own "oeuvre" as well, which is to say, of course, that neither "oeuvre" belongs properly to either of them. In this sense, too, the absence of work designates the work's improper belonging to a proper name.

The evocation of style and gesture are at once markers of the utterly personal, yet the form in which they are evoked signals some-

thing beyond the personal. This, in turn, resonates with Foucault's notion of "subjectivation," which Deleuze explains as follows: "A process of subjectivation, that is, a production of a mode of existence, cannot be confused with a subject, unless it is to discharge the latter from all interiority and even from all identity. Subjectivation does not even have anything to do with the 'person': it is an individuation, specific or collective, that characterizes an event (a time of the day, a river, a wind, a life . . .). It is an intensive mode and not a personal subject."[32] Deleuze and Foucault are not so much individual writers and thinkers as they are a mode or a configuration or even a constellation. They are a multiplicity that encompasses, in every gesture or evocation, a vast network of domains that might be variously classified as the philosophical, the political, the personal. They are not one thinker or even one unit, but rather an approach to thought—which is also a singularity—one that traverses a wide array of discourses. The concept of such a thought-configuration is nowhere better articulated, in fact enacted by being articulated, than in their corpus of mutually glorifying essays. Such a mode of encomium as conversation, neither critique nor original, might best be characterized as the replication or double of that which it describes: thought as pure event, thought as theater, thought as style and gesture.

Yet, there is more. Let us return to another of Deleuze's evocations of Foucault, a subsequent interview that is virtually an exact repetition of the lines quoted above—but with a slight twist. Questioned again about subjectivation, Deleuze responds:

> Subjectivation is the production of modes of existence or styles of life. . . . Subjectivation as a process is an individuation. . . . There are individuations of the 'subject' variety (this is you . . . this is me . . .), but there are also individuations of the event variety, without a subject: a wind, an atmosphere, a time of the day, a battle. It is not certain that a life, or a work of art, is individuated like a subject, in fact, to the contrary. Foucault himself, one did not grasp him exactly like a person. Even on insignificant occasions, when he entered a room, it was rather like a change of atmosphere, a kind of event, an electric or magnetic field, or what you will. This

> did not at all exclude gentleness or well-being, but it wasn't on the order of the person. It was an ensemble of intensities.[33]

Here it is a question of Foucault "himself" [*lui-même*], yet Foucault himself, not as person but as intensity, not as subject but as process of subjectivation. In short, Foucault is not Foucault but rather the effect of Foucault. But does an effect really enter a room in an insignificant fashion? Is a presence that effects atmospheric changes not also indelibly linked to a sense of person-as-presence, even if it is only in the most instantaneous of gestures? In other words, how can Foucault-as-pure-effect, in entering a room, not at the very least evoke the longing for Foucault as just a person named Michel Foucault? Such a notion clearly runs counter to the intricate concept of subjectivation developed above and to its aura of impersonality. Yet it holds out the possibility of simultaneously thinking in opposition. It is not unlike the nonbeliever, irrevocably convinced of the absence or death of God, who can only feel a mischievous thrill in the thought that God might actually be up there watching. In this case, it is a matter of taking up a proffered temptation, that of picturing, in an overtly representational fashion, Foucault-the-man entering a room and Deleuze-the-man standing on the other side thinking, "Here has entered my friend Michel, just him and nothing more." Surely such a fantasy is philosophically untenable. But it is the brilliance of this exchange to foreclose this possibility with a perfectly *mise-en-abîme* systematicity *and* to open it up, simultaneously, with every deftly dropped gestural trace, to open up the unthinkable: maybe these are just two good friends saying very fine things about each other. Indeed, such a double possibility of reading goes to the very heart of the mode of philosophical encomium at issue here.

While my aim is to show how this mode—in its unique conjoining of form and content—provides a new and more perspicacious lens from which to view the work of the thinkers in question, there is a counterargument to this position that always lurks in the background in the form of a continual challenge on the level of seriousness: Why should the writings of good friends about each other be

taken seriously in the first place? Can't this all be explained as meaningless chatter between friends? Although, as I have argued, "chatter" and "friendship" contain within them the contradictory impulses of silence and impersonality and are not to be taken lightly, it is nonetheless important also to acknowledge that the concepts at issue in this study (and here we add the concept of "absence of work") all beg the question of insignificance or meaninglessness. And it is important that they do so, for this underlying threat of insignificance is paradoxically what gives this delirious mode of encomium its philosophical import. Because its seriousness is never precisely legible, because its excessiveness is always defamiliarizing, because it verges on the overpersonal—for all these reasons and more, such a form of writing challenges us to pose questions that might otherwise not be asked: What constitutes proper philosophical writing or proper critical writing? Is a critical work's import only in its content, or, as in a literary domain, is it also bound up with issues of form? If so, must the form and content come together, or might a critical work indeed be nothing but form, and perhaps nothing at all, and in this sense also be an absence of work?

Insofar as these personal evocations constitute a form and a corpus of writing, it is useful to consider the way that the gestural is central to this form. The gestural moments in Deleuze's evocations of Foucault are too multiple and varied to properly enumerate. A few examples must suffice. Deleuze is fond of describing Foucault as a "seer"; he writes: "Foucault delighted in articulating statements, and in uncovering the statements of others, only because he also had a passion for seeing: what defines *him in his own right* is above all the voice, but also the eyes. *The eyes, the voice.* Foucault never stopped being a seer, while at the same time marking philosophy with a new style of statement, each of the two in a different step, in a double rhythm."[34] The "double rhythm" that Deleuze suggests is, quite predictably by now, also applicable to Deleuze's own text, which flows according to its proper double rhythm: the personal, visionary aspect of Foucault is at once absolutely inextricable from Foucault the critical writer, indeed the very thinking of the Foucauldian "énoncé"[35] is

altogether bound up with the assemblages of vision and enunciation—the eyes, the voice—of the great visionary; and yet—what is one to make of the traces that would imply something also beyond, something palpable only as the slightest yet weightiest of gestures toward that which cannot be spoken, the "himself" [*lui-même*], the sentence-phrase "the eyes, the voice" [*les yeux, la voix*]? What wistful, or hardened, or trembling tones accompany such phrasings? Might it be the absent grain of the voice that marks the otherworldly double of an otherwise perfect *mise-en-abîme* apparatus?[36] It is hard not to be caught up in speculations of what these small phrasings might contain: the recent death of an estranged friend, an estrangement sparked by a political disagreement in 1977[37] after which Deleuze and Foucault never saw or spoke to each other again (though they did exchange letters about each other's work), Deleuze's retrospective comments on this and the pain it caused him.[38] It was an acute receptiveness to this realm of painful silence and the other forms of communication it occasions that was, in fact, the unrelenting motivation for this framing of a topic.

In *Dialogues,* Deleuze conjures up Foucault when he discusses the concept of the encounter: "I can talk of Foucault, tell you that he has said this or that to me, set it out as I see it. This is nothing as long as I have not been able really to encounter this set of sounds hammered out, of decisive gestures, of ideas all made of tinder and fire, of deep attention and sudden closure, of laughter and smiles which one feels to be 'dangerous' at the very moment when one feels tenderness."[39] Here we have the gesture not only as it intersects the person of Foucault but also as it intersects philosophy. And this goes to the heart of the genre of the laudatory encounter as such. This form of encounter is in many ways a gestural one—while in one sense it is an encomium to the thought of another and an engagement with that thought, it is also a form of attentiveness to the gestural traces of the other ("the eyes, the voice") and an equally gestural engagement with them (an exchange of gesture for gesture). Finally, then, it is a way of doubling these two logics back onto each other, so that neither is clearly distinct.

To further explicate the gestural logic at work in the encounter between Deleuze and Foucault, we might turn to Walter Benjamin's emphasis on the *gestus* in his readings of Kafka and Brecht. Benjamin writes that "what Kafka could see least of all was the *gestus.* Each gesture is an event—one might even say, a drama—in itself. . . . Like El Greco, Kafka tears open the sky behind every gesture; but as with El Greco—who was patron saint of the Expressionists—the gesture remains the decisive thing, the center of the event."[40] In this fashion, Benjamin links Kafka to El Greco, and the gesture to the event. What is notable here is the way the Benjaminian gesture, in its connection to the event, is neither precisely corporeal nor incorporeal, yet is also both at once. While the gesture is clearly connected to the body or to the person, its opening into the event is a delinking or depersonalization that ushers in other realms ("tears open the sky behind every gesture").

In a strikingly similar fashion, Deleuze and Félix Guattari relate the event to "incorporeal transformations" in which "content" and "expression" intermingle in such a way as to at once remain distinct yet also become inextricably interlinked.[41] As in Benjamin's reading, Kafka serves as an exemplary model for the type of assemblage Deleuze and Guattari seek to articulate: "No one is better than Kafka at differentiating the two axes of the assemblage and making them function together. On the one hand, the ship-machine, the hotel-machine, the circus-machine, the castle-machine, the court-machine, each with its own intermingled pieces, gears, processes, and bodies contained in one another or bursting out of containment. . . . On the other hand, the regime of signs or of enunciation: each regime with its incorporeal transformations, acts, death sentences and judgments, proceedings, 'law.' "[42] Both Benjamin, and Deleuze and Guattari, each in their different fashion, emphasize how Kafka's world—like the gesture—functions at two levels, or along two axes. These levels might be likened on the one hand to the physical entity or its movement, and on the other hand to the incorporeal intensity that the physical entity evokes. Deleuze and Guattari develop this corporeal-

incorporeal disjunction in a later passage in *A Thousand Plateaus* when they write:

> We witness a transformation of substances and a dissolution of forms, a passage to the limit or flight from contours in favor of fluid forces, flows, air, light, and matter, such that a body or a word does not end at a precise point. We witness the incorporeal power of that intense matter, the material power of that language. A matter more immediate, more fluid, and more ardent than bodies or words. . . . Gestures and things, voices and sounds, are caught up in the same "opera," swept away by the same shifting effects of stammering, vibrato, tremolo, and overspilling.[43]

By this analogy the thoughts and gestures that circulate around Deleuze and Foucault form their own material force, one that is neither simply bodies nor simply words, but rather the product of the transformations that they inflict upon each other.

This provocative combination of gesture and event, of danger and tenderness, as it is unleashed suddenly by laughter or a smile is, in its own right, poignantly striking. It is all the more so as an enunciation marked by a date—1977—the year in which Foucault and Deleuze ceased to see or to speak to one another. From this date on, such an ensemble of sounds and gestures, such a perceptual apparatus, no longer governed the conversation between Deleuze and Foucault. Rather, this conversation took new form in private comments and communications,[44] and in the interviews, lectures, and essays that Deleuze devoted to Foucault. At issue, then, is how this new form continued or ceased to capture the gestic and event-laden quality that marked the more personal encounters. In other words, did the political falling-out between Deleuze and Foucault occasion a structural shifting of Deleuze-Foucault as event? Just as one might locate breaks and ruptures within Foucault's own oeuvre,[45] so too are there breaks and ruptures within the event that is the Deleuze-Foucault ensemble. One such rupture was their falling-out in 1977, another was Foucault's death in 1984. Neither rupture marks the cessation of their great conversation (as François Ewald so aptly describes it in his pre-

sentation of their exchanges entitled "Foucault, Deleuze: Un Dialogue fécond et ininterrompu" [Foucault, Deleuze: An abundant and uninterrupted dialogue]),[46] but they do mark important spatiotemporal reconfigurations.

Pronounced at the advent of such a reconfiguration, the juxtaposition of danger and tenderness, and of gesture and event, is also the prophetic future anterior of a subtle reassembling of Deleuze-Foucault. It is the already palpable nostalgia for what *will have been* an enchanted realm of speech and visibility, a realm that will henceforth exist under different economies of exchange and different modes of perception. And the subtlety lies precisely in this: that such ruptures necessitate, at the enunciative level, an acknowledgment of the new form of relation—one cannot act as if one is still speaking to someone when tangible communication has effectively ceased; one cannot regard someone or something else as not-dead when life has ceased or there has never been a living entity to begin with. To do otherwise would be considered madness. Yet sometimes it is altogether more appropriate to say that *nothing* has really changed, though such an articulation is strictly disallowed. The "danger" encompassed by the entity Foucault-Deleuze is not so much that the event of their coming together will be irretrievably lost as that it will soon have to be seen as lost or altered when in fact it never really was or is.

To both reiterate and summarize this argument, I will turn to a final Deleuzian evocation of Foucault:

> For those who met Foucault, what struck them were his eyes, his voice, and a straight stature between the two. The flashes and sparklings, the statements that tore themselves away from words, even Foucault's laughter was a statement. That there is a disjunction between the seen and the spoken, that the two are separated by a gap, an irreducible distance, signifies only this: the problem of knowledge [*connaissance*] (or rather of "knowledge" [*savoir*]) will not be resolved by appealing to a correspondence, nor to a likeness.[47]

Once again, the gestural traces of the eyes and the voice mark out the registers of this entity-beyond-a-mere-person that is Foucault. Sepa-

rated by an irreducible difference—yet this time with the unprecedented figure of the "straight stature" in between (what is one to make of this?)—the eyes and the voice are also the markers of the irreconcilable difference between the impersonal Foucault and the virtually unspeakable personal one.

With respect to this "personal" Foucault, it is interesting to note the prodigious industry of Foucault biographies.[48] In contrast to the overwhelming surplus of details that these biographies provide, the details that Deleuze proffers—and they are generally the same gestural tracings (the eyes, the voice, the laugh) repeated over and over again—seem paradoxically more revelatory. While the biographies say everything that can be said and then some, Deleuze's quiet repetition of a few gestural details says even more by its vast silences. While the biographies would present a Foucault laid bare, Deleuze presents a Foucault who haunts. Just as Deleuze writes that "one thing haunts Foucault—thought,"[49] so in turn does Foucault-as-thought haunt Deleuze. The repetitive details thus unleashed are like a mantra of the haunted, a mantra that enunciates far more than the precise words it repeats. Factually, these details present very little, but gesturally, they say more than a torrent of words. The repetitive fixing upon select details or physical aspects (the eyes, the voice) narrate a poignancy and intensity that are difficult to behold without flinching. These details and aspects are markers of a form of friendship that contains within it its own forms of extremity, contradiction, and nonconnection. In this regard, the form of friendship particular to Deleuze and Foucault might be seen as a combination of the friendships, outlined above, between Bataille and Blanchot and between Blanchot and Foucault. While the former pushes personal friendship to its limit in silence, and the latter pushes impersonal friendship to its limit in a conversation going beyond death, the friendship of Deleuze and Foucault incorporates at once both the personal and the impersonal forms of friendship detailed in the preceding chapters.

To return to the difference marking the *mise-en-abîme* structure of the impersonal Foucault and the gestural beyond of the personal one, it is useful to cite Deleuze's *Différence et répétition,* where he writes

that "these two lines of research spontaneously came together, because on every occasion *these concepts of a pure difference and a complex repetition* seemed to connect and coalesce."[50] There is, in this ceaseless repetition of slight difference, of slight displacement, which is Deleuze on Foucault, a haunting mantra that runs counter to a notion of work as constructive expenditure or the work as a gradually produced and tangible corpus. Instead, we are confronted with the gestural traces of marked absence and marked repetition, the madness of the work's absence in what would seem to be its incessant compilation.

Foucault on Deleuze

It is with respect to Deleuze's *Différence et répétition* and *Logique du sens*[51] that Foucault in his turn repeats and recasts the Deleuzian laudatory madness. In both "Ariane s'est pendue" [Ariadne hung herself] (Foucault's 1969 review of *Différence et répétition*)[52] and "Theatrum Philosophicum" (Foucault's 1970 review of *Différence et répétition* and *Logique du sens*),[53] Foucault extols in magisterial tones the radical event that Deleuze has enacted in the realm of thought. He writes in "Ariane s'est pendue" that "thought at the height of its intensity will itself be difference and repetition: it will differentiate what representation tried to bring together; it will perform the indefinite repetition for which obstinate metaphysics sought the origin."[54] As both philosopher of difference and repetition and producer of it in his own texts, Deleuze, according to Foucault (which in turn echoes Deleuze), maps out thought as pure theater and with this performs a singular achievement. Foucault concludes that "Deleuze's book is the marvelous theatre, always new, where those differences that we are, those differences that we make, those differences among which we wander, are playing. Of all the books that have been written for a long while, this is the most singular, the most different, and that which best repeats the differences that intersect us and disperse us. Theatre of the now."[55] In thus resuming the Deleuzian theater, Foucault speaks not as its critic but as its even more audacious fellow player.

In the even more effusively laudatory "Theatrum Philosophicum," Foucault hails the singular thinker who has liberated philosophy as theatre, as event, and back again as thought: "[A] lightning storm was produced which will, one day, be given the name of Deleuze: new thought is possible; thought is again possible."[56] Such unabashedly extreme encomium might be seen as itself the highest theatrical enactment of thought, in fact as a new form of thinking. In this manner, the already-familiar *mise-en-abîme* structure takes a slightly different twist. Not only is Foucault enacting precisely what he extols in Deleuze (and this in the very act of extolling him), but, paradoxically, he is specifically *not* trying to produce new thought. Foucault is neither offering up a critique of Deleuze nor striving to achieve something original in his own right. As David Macey puts it, " 'Theatrum Philosophicum' is a celebration rather than a critical review. . . . Foucault does not expound or explain Deleuze's texts; he celebrates them by joining a dance in which his partners include Leiris, de Sade, Bataille, Klossowski, and Lewis Carroll's Alice."[57] In this regard, Foucault's mode of writing about Deleuze might be likened to that of biblical exegesis, in which the holy text is taken as a given and the commentary addressed to it neither works to amend it nor aspires to outshine it, but rather is compelled to magnify the divine illumination it already provides. Somewhat ironically, then, the notion of *producing* thought is anathema to Foucault's project; instead, it is a question of reveling in a "thought from the outside" that is beyond either production or reproduction. Such a logic is still bound up with the *mise-en-abîme* structure, except that here it works in perfect reverse: by *not* trying to enact what is theorized, by *not* attempting to produce new thought, a new possibility of thinking otherwise, of thinking in conversation, is opened up.

And yet something surely remains. Again, it is an excess, if not an outlandishness, of tone. The preeminent example is the often-cited passage that begins Foucault's "Theatrum Philosophicum": "I believe that these works will continue to revolve about us in enigmatic resonance with those of Klossowski, another major and excessive sign, and perhaps one day, this century will be known as Deleuzian."[58]

The reference to Klossowski aside,[59] this incomparably strong statement touches the same level of excessiveness as Deleuze's understated yet obsessive evocation of the gesture. Like Deleuze's quiet mantra of the haunted, the sheer flamboyance of Foucault's extreme utterance also speaks an intensity that is perhaps too blinding to stare at straight away. What blinds and immobilizes is the uncertainty: not knowing exactly how to read this, yet also knowing that it demands a reading. Deleuze himself registers such an uncertainty when questioned directly about this statement. When asked by Robert Maggiori to comment on Foucault's extraordinary pronouncement, Deleuze replied demurely—and diabolically: "I don't know what Foucault meant. I never asked him. He had a diabolical sense of humor. Perhaps he meant this: that I was the most naive among the philosophers of our generation. We all use themes like multiplicity, difference, repetition. But I put forward almost crude concepts, while the others work with more mediations. . . . Perhaps it was this that Foucault meant: I wasn't the best, but the most naive, a sort of crude art, if you will; not the most profound, but the most innocent."[60]

The Deleuze-Foucault encounter is replete with what might be termed a playful, yet very serious innocence, one that is joyfully timid in the knowledge that others may be watching.[61] Such a joyful timidity is captured in Deleuze's shyly comical footnote to "Theatrum Philosophicum." Just after the passage where Foucault talks affirmatively about the effects of drugs, Deleuze suddenly appears in the margin of Foucault's text with the words "What will people think of us?"[62] Such a statement is simultaneously an invitation for people to think about them—and possibly to think with them—and also a modest warning that such thought can be dangerous, that it is more easily dismissed than taken up, and that if it is to be dismissed, then it is improper to stare it too long in the face, just as one is taught not to stare at those who are mad.

Writing from my Midwestern small-town vantage point, I might add that just today we have reencountered another starer, one who has recently moved here, perhaps to join the ranks of this town's large delegation of "sub-sane" (or, as Arthur Kroker puts it, those partak-

ing in the "prairie madness") in which we circulate timidly. This person's beady gaze from outside the fast-food establishment where we sit is terrifyingly relentless (perhaps we recognize something in it that mirrors our own mode of paranoid perception). The stare catches us in the exact reciprocation, the perfect doubling, of our own mode of existence. Yet to be looked at makes us timid, desirous of escape, ready to flee toward something outside this monstrous reciprocity. The unforgiving stare captures it all—the coexistence of a perfect doubling and a will to something beyond.

So, too, "What will people think?" both assures that people will be thinking and asks not to be looked at. Will people think that Deleuze and Foucault are up to nothing all too savory, or even just up to nothing? It is a possibility of no small importance. Where exactly is the work, the "oeuvre," in all of this? Could one liken it to Borges or to Stanislaw Lem writing book reviews for works that do not exist? Certainly *Histoire de la folie, Différence et répétition,* and the myriad other writings of Foucault and Deleuze do exist, but they are also a dizzying camouflage for the absent work, the excessively impersonal *and* personal set of gestures that remains apart from the work, only to be touched in lingering moments in an altogether different mode of exchange—that of delirious praise—a mode of exchange that does not work.

If Nietzsche signals the disappearance of God, Foucault the disappearance of the author, then perhaps Deleuze-Foucault hail the disappearance of the work. By bringing the work to both the absolute state of *mise-en-abîme* doubling and reciprocity *and* to something altogether apart from that, Foucault-Deleuze instantiate a nonchalant "one or the other, both and the same, either or both are okay" logic which is itself an *other* form of madness. Jacques Derrida writes in "La Parole soufflée" of "the *other* madness, . . . the metaphysics which lives *within* difference, within metaphor and the work, and thus within alienation; and lives within them without conceiving them *as such,* beyond metaphysics. Madness is as much alienation as inalienation. It is the work or the absence of the work."[63]

At stake is a new form of exegetical madness that is all text and no

text, the excessive laudatory commentary that produces the extraordinary effect of never having written anything. Let us return to Jacques Martin. He wrote something, then struggled and wrote nothing, then what was written was lost, and then again what was not written was gained, gained for the very fact of its being irretrievably lost. Here the contours of the work, because they are not filled in, will always be there. When the work is emphatically missing, it is strangely all the more there. With Deleuze and Foucault, there is so much there that even the outline is lost, even what is missing can be eclipsed by the perfect *mise-en-abîme* of what is not missing. In this excess of doubling and repetition that says nothing or else too much, resides a new form of madness, beautifully inoperative ("*désoeuvré*"),[64] which leaves one never where one thinks but which shamefully catches one thinking.

In *The Infinite Conversation,* Maurice Blanchot explicates several "concepts escaping every conceptualization." Of "*worklessness,* the absence of (the) work [*le désoeuvrement*]," he writes: "As Michel Foucault has reminded us in the strongest terms, the absence of work is used by current ideology to designate as 'madness' what it rejects. But the absence of work, confined in the asylum, is also always walled up in the work. If the work is elaborated on the basis of the work's absence, it will not rest until it has reduced this absence to insignificance, or, what is worse, rendered it proper to the understanding of a new order or the harmony of a new accord."[65] With Deleuze-Foucault, the absence of work is no longer strictly "walled up" [*murée*] in the work, for it has also become that new accord that is the absence of walls within the work, which is then no longer even work at all.

Yann Moulier Boutang formulates a sharp division between Jacques Martin on the one hand, and Foucault and Althusser on the other, when he writes, "For these two superior souls, Michel Foucault and Louis Althusser, fragile at the time—each in a different fashion, Jacques Martin is the shadow of failure, the mirror of what they could have become. The mythical philosopher 'without work,' which both made into a symbol, and sometimes a screen—this is Jacques Martin."[66] Here it is necessary to reverse Boutang's perspective and

wonder if perhaps it was not Jacques Martin that these two "superior" souls were striving to *become*, each after its own fashion. Indeed, Martin's absence of work is both a symbol and a screen for a certain moment of French thought, one that Deleuze-Foucault, in all their repetitive laudatory madnesses, have captured as a new form—absence of work.

5 *Bodies, Sickness, and Disjunction*

Deleuze, Klossowski, and the Revocation of Nietzsche

In turning from the laudatory exchanges between Foucault and Deleuze to those between Deleuze and Klossowski, it is important to register some differentials and continuities between these two groupings. On the one hand, much of what has been put forth with respect to Foucault and Deleuze applies to a large degree to the exchanges between Foucault and Klossowski. Foucault, for example, wrote of Klossowski's *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux* that "it is the greatest work of philosophy I have ever read, and that includes the work of Nietzsche himself."[1] Klossowski, in turn, dedicated his novel *Le Baphomet* to Foucault and considered Foucault to be his finest commentator.[2] Yet despite these similarities, the exchanges between Foucault and Klossowski have neither the excessiveness and repetitiveness nor the poignant imbalances of those between Foucault and Deleuze.

The exchanges between Deleuze and Klossowski are far more restrained in style than either of the above exchanges and indeed almost entirely eschew the personal. Unlike the friendships between Bataille and Blanchot, between Deleuze and Foucault, and even to a different and lesser degree between Blanchot and Foucault, that between Deleuze and Klossowski is nowhere addressed as such or commented on.[3] Theirs would seem to be a somewhat understated exchange,

comprising two pieces each on the other thinker: Deleuze's "Pierre Klossowski ou les corps-langage" (1965) ["Klossowski or Bodies-Language"] and Deleuze and Guattari's "La Synthèse disjonctive" [The disjunctive synthesis] (1970); and Klossowski's "Digression à partir d'un portrait apocryphe" [Elaborations from an apocryphal portrait] and "Roberte et Gulliver" [Roberte and Gulliver] (both 1972).[4] Yet concealed in this exchange, and linked once again to a third figure—Friedrich Nietzsche—is a preoccupation with something that, if not exactly the personal, is nonetheless focused on the person, or more nearly, the body. More precisely, it is a body in some form of extreme state, a state that in turn enables a movement-potential and materialization-potential of thought—the possibility that thought might become both something else and something new. This body takes different forms in what follows, from the woman's body (that of Klossowski's heroine Roberte), to the Jewish body, and above all, to the sick body of Nietzsche.

Michel Foucault concludes "Theatrum Philosophicum," his celebrated laudatory review of Gilles Deleuze's *Logique du sens* and *Différence et répétition* (discussed above) with a reference to the bodies of Nietzsche and Klossowski: "In the sentry box of the Luxembourg Gardens, Duns Scotus places his head through the circular window; he is sporting an impressive moustache; it belongs to Nietzsche, disguised as Klossowski."[5] This seemingly nonsensical conclusion articulates the dizzying lines of exchange between Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski, an exchange not limited to the three contemporaries but extending outward to encompass Nietzsche and Duns Scotus, among others. Furthermore, all partake, quite literally, of the same body: they share Duns Scotus's head, Nietzsche's moustache, Klossowski's simulacrum, and presumably Deleuze's thought (not to mention Foucault's). In Foucault's evocative conclusion to "Theatrum Philosophicum," the body is no longer the marker of a single person but instead represents both the breakdown of identity and the coming together of composite identities. It is precisely around this locus, the body (or the body as thought) as a means of complicating and overthrowing identity, that the works of Deleuze and Klossowski—as well

as their writings about each other—resonate and come together. I will first consider the combination of body and thoughts as they are figured around the character of Roberte, the heroine of Klossowski's *Les Lois de l'hospitalité* [The laws of hospitality]; then the figure of the Jew as it relates to the Protestant and the woman; and finally, the sick body of Nietzsche in Klossowski's *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux* [Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle], focusing on how this work's dialectic of physical sickness and mental exuberance suggests the possibility of new and heightened forms of thought. In this fashion, as discussed at the outset, Klossowski's book on Nietzsche provides a template for reading not only the Deleuze-Klossowski exchange but indeed the whole series of exchanges at issue in this study. While the intonations of praise in the Deleuze-Klossowski exchange may appear lackluster in comparison to the preceding exchanges, the text upon which they culminate is, if anything, the most pivotal for the very genre of writing in question.

Klossowski and Disjunction

Klossowski begins his tribute to Deleuze, "Digression à partir d'un portrait apocryphe," in this way: "Deleuze is also assisted by his affinities with another exemplary spirit whose explorations reveal a common ground with his own: Michel Foucault. In every respect, both have this in common: the liquidation of the principle of identity."[6] Klossowski's own work (perhaps even more than Foucault's or Deleuze's) ceaselessly interrogates the principle of identity, and in the service of this interrogation, it constructs a world of phantasms, simulacra, bodies, and spirits. Before examining Deleuze's two essays on Klossowski, it is important to consider Klossowski's use of disjunction, specifically the disjunction of body and soul, as they are figured in his hospitality trilogy around the character of Roberte.

Les Lois de l'hospitalité and Klossowski's oeuvre as a whole operate according to a logic of oppositional extremes. According to this logic, two radically different entities coexist without undergoing a properly dialectical synthesis. The synthesis obtains, if at all, in the differential

of their difference. Such a logic of oppositions structures both the content and the form of Klossowski's fiction. On the one hand, there is a distinct narrative, centered on a couple, Octave and Roberte, with other characters such as their nephew Antoine or the parachuting adventurer Vittorio della Santa-Sede (who takes on many identities and aliases) serving as foils for their continuous dialogue. Each volume of the trilogy is replete with fantastic twists of narrative, where two or more characters will turn out to be only one, where one chain of events is actually a pretext for an entirely different set of circumstances (e.g., a story focused on the Catholic Church is also all about collaboration with the Nazis), and where unexpected and spontaneous sexual encounters are omnipresent. Yet on the other hand, these twisted narratives are mixed with treatise-like discourses on such subjects as Scholastic philosophy, art history, and photography (usually through the mouthpiece of Octave, who is a professor). Klossowski's oscillation between bizarre narrative and esoteric treatise recalls the disjunctions present in Sade, though Klossowski is not nearly as predictable.

A similar disjunctive structure operates at the level of the personal characteristics of Roberte and Octave in *Roberte ce soir* and *La Revocation de l'Edit de Nantes* (the first two books in the hospitality trilogy and the ones that will be discussed here), and later of Roberte and the duo Théodore/K in *Le Souffleur,* the third book of the trilogy.[7] This couple—and it is not incidental that they are, in fact, married—incarnates the cliché "opposites attract." Roberte is a young and striking woman with great social charm and much political savvy. Self-characterized as "the most prominent woman in the radical party,"[8] she serves on the National Education Commission and is also Inspectress of Censorship. Though descended from a long line of Protestant ministers, she is an outspoken atheist. Octave, a consummate esthete and art critic, is an aging professor of Scholastic philosophy who has been stripped of his position; he is an ardent, albeit rather heretical Catholic, who writes perversely erotic fiction and is a proponent of Sade. While these details are interestingly autobiographical with respect to Klossowski and his wife, Denise Marie

Roberte Morin-Sinclaire, what is noteworthy here is the disjunctive or oppositional nature of this coupling, which parallels and illustrates the similar disjunction that obtains between bodies and thoughts in Klossowski's work as a whole.

If these oppositions *within* the bonds of marriage are not enough, then it is all the more striking how Roberte and Octave also actualize within their marriage those infidelities that are commonly seen as antithetical to the very institution of marriage. Foremost among the infidelities is adultery itself, which consists in the master of the house giving over the mistress to engage in sexual relations with any and every guest who enters. Like marriage, these infidelities are governed by strict regulations, which Octave terms "the laws of hospitality":

> The master of this house . . . waits anxiously at the gate for the stranger he will see appear like a liberator upon the horizon. . . . For with the stranger he welcomes, the master of the house seeks a no longer accidental, but an essential relationship. At the start the two are but isolated substances, between them there is none but accidental communication. . . . But because the master of this house herewith invites the stranger to penetrate to the source of all substances beyond the realm of all accident, this is how he inaugurates a substantial relationship between himself and the stranger, which will be not a relative relationship but an absolute one, as though, the master becoming one with the stranger, his relationship with you who have just set foot here were now but a relationship of one with oneself.[9]

Under these laws of hospitality, a disjunctive synthesis, a bringing together of two differing entities—"two . . . isolated substances"—is effected. These two separate entities, the master of the house and the stranger, are brought into "substantial" relation through the body of a woman, Roberte. In "penetrat[ing] to the source of all substance beyond the realm of all accident," the stranger becomes one with the master: the host and guest are conflated. Such a conflation is perfectly conveyed by the French word *hôte,* which means both "host" and "guest." Moreover, the English *host* (*hostie* in French) conveys the conflation of body and spirit through the entity of the body of

Christ. By graciously usurping the role of the host, the guest, in actualizing this role of host, enables the host to take on the status of guest in his own house. Through the body of Roberte (just as, in what follows, through the sick body of Nietzsche), two opposed entities (husband and adulterer) are brought together, but brought together in a fashion that is not adversarial but rather "substantial." In other words, a body enables a conjunction of forces (here the host and the guest) that, when combined in such a fashion, rearranges given markers of identity (husband, adulterer) so that these identity formations are no longer absolute but instead in constant disarray (Klossowski's notion of "the liquidation of the principle of identity").

Apart from the guest/host disjunction, such a reconfiguration of identity occurs most prominently in Klossowski through the explicit medium of bodies and souls, or bodies and thoughts. The disjunction between bodies and souls is articulated in terms of purity and impurity. The undesirable conjunction is that of a pure body and impure thought, which can be passed off as general purity. Counteracting such a conjunction necessitates the enactment of a more shocking but ultimately more pure conjunction: that of the impure body and pure thought. In *Roberte ce soir,* Roberte is deemed guilty of the first offense. As a member of the Censorship Council, Roberte champions an effort to ban erotically explicit literature, including the work of her own husband. Yet when, returning home, she thinks about the literature in question, a discrepancy or impurity results. To counteract this, her thoughts fantastically become materialized as spirits (what Klossowski terms "pure breaths" or "pure spirits") that enact pornographic punishments upon her. As the spirits, in the form of a small Hunchback and a huge Guardsman, proceed to fondle and rape Roberte, they explain their grievances against her and give her ample time to recant:

> Your great sin in our eyes, Madame, is that you serve two masters, believing in one only so far as that belief is useful to you in disserving to the other, truthfully believing in neither of them. In relation to us, you attempt to maintain the fraudulent doctrine of dual substance. Are we the undesirable thoughts of your mind,

> then to us you oppose the muteness of a flesh to be withheld from our operations; why withheld, if you please, since by opposing it to your thoughts, tonight, which are nowhere else than in your spirit, it is from your very spirit you divorce this flesh; what now becomes of its integrity if it is not found in the principle of the resurrection of bodies? But in forbidding your poets, your artists, your players to describe, to paint, and above all to enact what we are operating upon you at the present moment, upon them you impose the muteness of integral flesh as if it were already the pure silence of spirits. Thus in relation to these composite substances, to these dual natures who employ speech to denounce their own duplicity, you have the nerve to act as a simple substance, that of the spirits who for lack of what is called passable flesh must be without hope of redemption and subsist valiantly in a spiritual death such as ours which you deny the instant you oppose to us the appearance of a flesh, as if it could be reborn incorruptible. Might you then be in agreement with us who refute this so-called mystery as a slur upon our dignity? Not a bit of it. For if a simple substance's pure silence is due to the absence of a speaking flesh, you clumsily confuse this silence with the muteness of a living flesh.[10]

Roberte, then, is guilty of keeping an impure silence. While speaking out against impure literature, she silently entertains impure thoughts about the very material in question. This situation provokes the impure thoughts to materialize, and when they do so, they effect exactly the opposite scenario: by performing impure actions on her body, the spirits hope to elicit in her a pure silence. In question here is a doubly dialectical reversal; instead of a pure body/language at the expense of an impure thought/silence, the oppositional and desirable dialectical structure is that of a pure thought/silence at the expense of an impure body/language.[11] Such an opposition is based on a relation, which derives from Scholastic philosophy, between simple and composite substances. For Klossowski, a simple substance would be either pure thought or pure body, while a composite substance would in some way bring the two into conjunction. Because Roberte tries to act like a pure thought by denying her body, she is reprimanded by

the pure spirits who try to elicit in her a recognition of the body's integral relation to thought.

We might pause to consider how this model of simple and composite substances reformulates the very problem of categorizing the laudatory exchanges between the different groupings of French thinkers in question. To take each component of the different pairings of thinkers in this study as an absolutely separate person would be to operate according to a "simple substance" logic of identity. Instead, by looking at the groupings in question as composite entities of thoughts and bodies in unique conjunction—and not as simple distinct persons—we begin to approximate what makes this genre of laudatory encounter so exceptional and unique. While most forms of critical engagement take distinct personhood as an absolute given (a response to, or critique of, a given text is written that sets the critic in a relation clearly demarcated from the work being criticized as well as its author), this form of laudatory encounter effects a breakdown of identity at the level of the person. Thus the philosophical pairs in question are composite substances yet not ones that are simply additive. They are singular combinations that intermingle bodies and thoughts in such a way as to make neither entirely distinct. Just as Klossowski's host and guest literally become a single—yet composite—entity through the medium of Roberte, so too do the philosophical couples in question become singular thought-entities, often through the medium of a third person or entity.

The Body of the Woman

The character of Roberte is in many ways the supreme locus of Klossowskian dialectics, the framework on which the fine points of the laws of hospitality are built and the breakdown of identity is effected. But in this structure, which sets up an economy of exchange between men, there remain troublesome gender dynamics. For clearly the enabling or catalytic force in this economy is none other than an essentialist notion of the woman (here Roberte) as body, in

contradistinction to the man, who becomes more spiritual as a result of his encounter with the woman's body. Yet my contention is that Roberte's role is not quite so straightforward, that it is not to be dismissed out of hand for its misogynist implications, for it in fact raises some challenging questions from a feminist perspective.[12]

It is hardly necessary to point out that Klossowski's system of hospitality is maintained at the expense of the very real body of the woman; in fact, it is easy to argue that such a construction is nothing more than another elaborate instance of "traffic in women." Indeed, Gayle Rubin's famous article by this title provides an exemplary gloss of the power relations that come to bear on the exchange of women between men:

> If it is women who are being transacted, then it is the men who give and take them who are linked, the woman being a conduit of a relationship rather than a partner to it. The exchange of women does not necessarily imply that women are objectified, in the modern sense, since objects in the primitive world are imbued with highly personal qualities. But it does imply a distinction between gift and giver. If women are the gifts, then it is men who are the exchange partners. And it is the partners, not the presents, upon whom reciprocal exchange confers its quasi-mythical power of social linkage. The relations of such a system are such that women are in no position to realize the benefits of their own circulation. As long as the relations specify that men exchange women, it is men who are the beneficiaries of the product of such exchanges—social organization.[13]

On one level, Roberte fits all too well into the economy Rubin outlines, one where women are oppressed first and foremost by dint of their role as objects of exchange. And the fact that Roberte's body, particularly her omnipresent gloved hands, is itself the primary locus for such exchange makes this text hard to recuperate for a feminist analysis.[14] Yet the fact that such a potential for recuperation exists, that at its limit this text might be read as gesturing toward a new and alternative feminist space, is precisely its extraordinary appeal.

Such an alternative can be constructed from Rubin's later "Think-

ing Sex," the follow-up and companion piece to "Traffic in Women." At the outset of "Thinking Sex," Rubin depicts two concentric circles: the interior circle, called "the charmed circle," represents all that is "normative" in heterosexuality; the outer circle, called "the outer limits," mirrors each trait of normativity with its corresponding and outcast opposite. So, for example, in the inner circle we find such traits as "heterosexual, married, monogamous, procreative, noncommercial, in pairs, in a relationship, same generation, in private, no pornography, bodies only, vanilla"; while the corresponding outer circle traits are "homosexual, unmarried, promiscuous, commercial, alone or in groups, casual, cross-generational, in public, pornography, with manufactured objects, sadomasochistic."[15] What is striking about Klossowski's *Les Lois de l'hospitalité* with respect to these circles is that the relationship between Octave and Roberte, while assuming the first two traits of the normative inner circle—heterosexual and married—falls into the outer circle for nearly all the other given traits. All of which is to say that here is no ordinary marriage, and Roberte is no ordinary wife. Insofar as Roberte has a subservient role to Octave in their unconventional heterosexual union, Roberte simultaneously opens up new possibilities of enacting and experiencing such a union. It is in this opening toward new possibilities that I would locate this work's feminist agenda.

In outlining such a feminist project, it is useful to situate Klossowski's fiction in relation to the history of pornographic fiction in France. While Klossowski's fiction (and also his paintings, which often serve as illustrations to it)[16] might be classified as pornographic, it is also, in the vein of Sade, concerned with staging philosophical and religious dialogues, analyzing facetious works of art, and alluding more or less covertly to the political resonances of the Second World War. To call Klossowski's fiction pornographic does not sufficiently register many of its other nuances. Yet if we locate Klossowskian pornography in a Revolutionary tradition of pornographic writing, these additional nuances begin to make more sense. As Lynn Hunt argues in "Pornography and the French Revolution," pornography underwent a substantial shift in register after the Revolution. In its

Revolutionary incarnation, pornography incorporated aspects of materialist philosophy, worked to overtly subversive political ends, and was not inherently debasing to women. But all this changed after the Revolution, when pornography was depoliticized and also infused with pejorative moral overtones.[17]

Hunt stresses the central role of Sade in such a shift from politicized to pejorative pornography: "Sade's novels marked an important transition in the 1790s. He took the politically and socially subversive possibilities to their furthest possible extreme and, at the same time and perhaps by the same act, he paved the way for the modern apolitical genre of pornography. His attack on every aspect of conventional morality undermined the use of pornography for political ends in the future. Pornography was now identified with a general assault on morality itself, rather than a specific criticism of the irrationalities of the ancien regime moral system."[18] Like Sade, Klossowski takes "politically and socially subversive possibilities to their fullest possible extreme." Though Klossowski's fiction is arguably bolstered by misogynist modes of representation, it is simultaneously an attack on all that is most sacred to conventional morality, particularly to the institution of marriage.

Instead of presenting an alternative to the marital institution that is beyond or outside of it, Klossowski explodes it from within. Instead of presenting an anarchistic world of free play where all sexual mores are acceptable, Klossowski institutes a system of laws just as rigid as those surrounding marriage, though this new system of laws works to precisely the opposite effect. In lieu of attempting to protect the marital bond from the ever-present threat of adultery, Klossowski makes the adulterous prostitution of the wife into the supreme law of the household, the law of hospitality. Instead of being constrained to sexual encounters with only her husband, Roberte is constrained to sexually encounter all other men *except* him. It is as if Octave ensures his wife's fidelity by imposing on her a law of infidelity—whereas he could have waited around in fear of Roberte's infidelity, he instead anticipates it and outwits it by insisting upon it. In this regard, Klossowski employs the disjunctive extremes of adultery and fidelity as

they are figured around the woman's body to give the sacrament of heterosexual union a strange new identity, one that paradoxically upholds the laws of marriage and fidelity by pushing them to their limits. While such a refashioning of marriage is in some sense carried out at the woman's expense, here it is complicated by the fact that Roberte indefatigably seeks out and embraces each new adventure that awaits her.

Roberte's active, aggressive attitude might be explicated once again by considering the role of women in Revolutionary pornography. As Kathryn Norberg argues, French pornographic writings from the Revolutionary period refuse to depict women merely as victims of men or as morally inferior creatures. She writes that "virtually all of the works included in this group present a particular picture of the prostitute, what I call the 'libertine whore.' This whore . . . is independent, sensual, sensible and skilled. She is healthy and possessed of a very healthy . . . sexual appetite. She is a businesswoman and an artist who provides 'varied' sex for men who can afford it. She is a courtesan who lives in luxury and abides by 'philosophy,' usually materialist philosophy. Intelligent, independent, proud and reasonable, she is *not* diseased or monstrous; she is not humiliated or victimized either by life or by her clients."[19] This positive depiction of the "libertine whore" is strikingly characteristic of Roberte. She is an important radical political figure; she is supremely intelligent, elegant, and self-composed, even while being repeatedly submitted to surprise sexual encounters.

While Roberte is indeed "submitted" to such encounters in *Roberte ce soir,* the division between the aggressor and the one attacked, between initiator and initiate, is far from clear in *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes.* Like the libertine whore whom Norberg characterizes as actively seeking out her pleasure and as narrating her story in the first person rather than through the mediating voice of a man, Roberte herself initiates encounters and narrates them through a series of journal entries (presented in alternation with Octave's narrative). In one such encounter, Roberte seduces a young bank clerk who has come to their home to see Octave. In front of her husband,

Roberte makes overtures to the young man, and the two soon retreat to a separate room. Then the phone rings; it is a call for Octave, and he must retrieve the receiver from underneath the very chair on which Roberte and the clerk have planted themselves. Apart from the clerk, everyone privy to this scene appears to be singularly unfazed. In further journal entries entitled "The Roman Impressions," which are actually flashbacks to a time ten years earlier, Roberte relates her encounters with wounded soldiers while she was serving as a Red Cross volunteer in Rome just before the city's liberation in 1944. It appears that much of Roberte's interest in such an enterprise is in fact bound up with the possibilities (for sexual transgression) that such a situation offers.

Roberte's journal entries not only narrate her various encounters but also reflect critically on them. In these entries, Roberte meditates both on her own situation and on the situation of women in general. In one entry, she expounds a philosophical argument *against* Octave's theology, one in which she discusses how the conjunction of woman and the body can be used to ends that would abolish the distinction between body and soul:

> Yes, Octave, we [women] are natural-born atheists; and atheism's progress in the world of today may perhaps have its true source here: the growing importance of the hand we are taking, the weight we are exerting in present affairs. Yet our basic refusal to *believe* is as different from that of a knowingly and determinedly atheistic male as the latter's bias is from the faith of a nun. I'll go still further: my own cousin, converted to Catholicism, today in a Ursuline convent, is nearer to me in her attitude than my friend Sarah, an out-and-out materialist. The feeling she has for her body, more profoundly inherent in woman than in man, is also the reason why she is better able to stifle the senses, to attain insensibility, than the ascetic; no more body, no more soul; perfect death; an extinction with which, however, we have an almost sweet relationship, a tender one; our nothingness is as *warm* as our body; *sang-froid* is nothing but virile vanity.[20]

According to such an analysis, the body, and specifically the body of the woman, serves as a conduit or means of access to another realm

(here, explicitly antitheological) where the identity of the body is transformed into "insensibility," "extinction," and "nothingness." In this regard, Roberte serves as a mouthpiece for—indeed, a dramatization of—the Klossowskian principle of the "liquidation of identity."

These lines also reveal the complexity of Roberte's experience of the laws of hospitality. While confessing to feelings of dishonor and shame, Roberte also experiences keen enjoyment from this debasement, a debasement that for her marks an outpost of fantasy and unreality in a world burdened by responsibility.[21] If Octave's laws of hospitality are to be deemed perverse, then Roberte's mode of complying with them is equally perverse. In her essay on Klossowski in *Intersections,* Jane Gallop writes that "the perversion of the notion of prostitution to a point where the prostitution endangers the identity of the client makes the question of which is the greater whore" and then that "the whore in her radical femininity has the potential for the Nietzschean superman."[22] Similarly, Roberte's actions lead us to question who is really more perverse: the instigator of the law of hospitality or she who, in her subjection to this law, conforms well beyond the call of duty, and in this radical conformity transforms the law into a parody of itself. Moreover, Gallop's reference to Nietzsche is altogether fitting, for as Klossowski himself makes explicit in his analysis of Nietzsche—and, as we shall see, Deleuze takes up in his analysis of Klossowski—the experience of the body in its extreme states (sex, sickness) provides access to an otherwise inaccessible realm of lucidity, one where the distinction between body and thought, between matter and energy, is momentarily suspended.

The Body of the Jew

Before turning to Deleuze's encounter with the Klossowskian body, I will consider yet another identity that this body takes on in Klossowski's fiction, namely that of the Jew. In *Eperons: Les Styles de Nietzsche,* Derrida links the woman and the Jew not only vis-à-vis Nietzsche but vis-à-vis the simulacrum as well. It is noteworthy that throughout this work Derrida refers frequently and with great admi-

ration to Klossowski's translations of Nietzsche.[23] He writes, "Through its praises of simulation, *The Gay Science* ranks Jews and women, who are always experts in simulation, among the artists. The association of the Jew and the woman is probably not insignificant. Nietzsche often treats them in a parallel fashion, which perhaps brings us back again to the motifs of castration and the simulacrum."[24] Castration aside, the parallel that Derrida highlights between the woman and the Jew is significant not only for a reading of Nietzsche but also for a reading of Klossowski, and in what follows, a reading of Klossowski reading Nietzsche and Deleuze reading Klossowski. The link that Derrida makes between simulation—one of the key Klossowskian themes[25]—and both the woman and the Jew can also be made with respect to simulation and embodiment. If the body is never just a body in itself but always also a medium of transformation that is in complex relation to someone or something else, then the body is a simulation of a single identity or simple substance, while also forming a composite substance with that which modifies it.

In the hospitality trilogy, and in particular in *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes,* the figure of the Jew is at once a quality of embodiment, an allusion to Nietzsche, and a conduit to something that would seem to be its opposite, namely the Protestant. Insofar as Roberte stands in for "woman," she is also emblematic of the Protestant, and, via a dense field of associations, of the Jew as well, at least as far as the Jew and the Protestant can be brought into a relation of equivalence. This insight is derived from Jeffrey Mehlman's "Literature and Hospitality: Klossowski's Hamann," in which he unveils the Jewish undercurrents in Klossowski's oeuvre and elucidates an entire network of Jewish-Protestant / Catholic-German connections. The first relates to Klossowski and Walter Benjamin, whose "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" Klossowski translated into French. Mehlman connects Octave's laudatory discussions of Daguerre and photography in *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes* with Benjamin's seminal essay on mechanical reproduction. Each, in its fashion, brings together the lost aura that is never quite captured by the photograph and a commentary on fascist aesthetics.

Mehlman links this first set of connections to Klossowski's subsequent translation of the German-Jewish linguist Johan-Georg Hamann's *Méditations bibliques,* in which Hamann depicts his conversion to the Protestant persuasion. The very phrase "law of hospitality" comes from a line in one of Hamann's letters, in which he describes the "hospitality" he has received at the hands of the German Catholic Berens family (Hamann has proposed to, and been rejected by, one of the Berens sisters). Meanwhile, Hamann becomes engaged in the burning linguistic debate concerning the silent letter *h*. When a certain scholar, C. T. Damm, launches a campaign to eliminate silent *h* from German, Hamann writes a defense of silent *h* entitled "A New Apology of the Letter h by Itself" in which *h*, calling itself a "breath," speaks out against its tormentors. Although Mehlman does not explicitly draw this out, there is a strong parallel between the silent *h* that speaks out and the pure breaths, or pure spirits, that accost Roberte. Both seek to counteract and revenge the silence that has been inflicted upon them. At issue here, once again, is a dialectic between silence and speaking, and between simple substances and composite ones. Like the pure breaths, *h* is a simple substance that seeks embodiment—here, linguistic embodiment—as a means of retaining its complexity.[26]

Mehlman draws out yet another parallel, this time an overtly political one, between the Protestants and the Jews. In *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes,* Roberte details in the "Roman Impressions" section of her journal how she is accosted (while working in 1944 as a Red Cross volunteer in Rome) by a convalescent Nazi officer named von A. In addition to affronting her sexually, von A charges Roberte with the mission of retrieving a packet of hidden letters from the altar of a church. He seeks out Roberte for this mission because he rightly guesses that she is not Catholic. The scandalous letters purportedly document the history of von A's incestuous relationship with his sister Malwyda. Such a reference playfully harks back to Nietzsche. In *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux,* Klossowski translates and quotes in its entirety a letter from Nietzsche to Malwyda von Meysenbug in which Nietzsche begins with the following lines: "Although writing is for

me one of the most forbidden fruits, yet I must write a letter to you, whom I love and respect like an elder sister—and it will probably be the last!"[27] However, when Roberte presses for details, von A discloses that what the altar really contains is a list of names of Jewish children, children he was supposed to have deported but instead clumsily allowed to survive. Von A fears that the Nazis will discover the list and punish him accordingly, so he wants Roberte to uncover it and confiscate it first.

Like the pure breaths and the silent *h,* the list of names clamors for recognition so as not to be entirely obliterated. What is at stake, then, is not just the Catholic-Protestant nexus, but also the German-Jewish one. As Mehlman puts it, "The Catholic persecution of the Protestants, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, is here transformed into the Nazi persecution of the Jews."[28] Thus, the "revocation of the Edict of Nantes" evokes in one stroke the "hospitality" visited by the Catholics on the Protestants in 1685, the laws of hospitality inflicted by Octave on Roberte, and finally that most sinister hospitality that the Germans leveled upon the Jews. (And to make this parallel all the more complete, it should be noted that Octave was an ardent supporter of the Vichy government, while Roberte worked in the French Resistance!) In this instance, the Jewish body—specifically that of the Jewish child[29]—is disguised in language (given the name of the sister) and thereby dismissed from existence, just like the pure spirits who come to accost Roberte. And just like the letter *h,* the Jewish children are only represented by letters—the names in the altar—that stand in as the sole marker of their existence. In short, what we see throughout Klossowski's writings is a restaging of the same encounter between simple and composite substances, between silence and language, between letters—or pure breaths—and bodies.

This sudden encounter with the Jewish body, as well as the sudden physical encounter between Roberte and von A, contributes to the vertiginous quality of *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes,* for the story never remains long enough in the same place to give a reader any sense of bearing: as if the relationship between Roberte and Octave is not complicated enough, set off against it is the flashback to the Ro-

man episode and the introduction of the Nazi von A. As if Roberte's desecration of the altar is not enough, to top it off there are the hidden names of Jewish children. The introjection of a network of contradictory political and historical allegiances puts a dizzying spin on a work of fiction that is already notable for its bizarre abstruseness.[30] Not only does each new detail compound the web of disjointed relations, but the contradictory nature of the "facts" keeps any sort of definitive reading at bay. For example, while the names of the Jewish children supplant the explanation of the incestuous relationship with the sister Malwyda, both explanations are equally outlandish. Furthermore, the evocation of Nietzsche's "sisterly" relationship to his friend Malwyda—as well as the implicit link between Nietzsche's own sister and her co-optation of his writings for fascist rhetoric—puts the whole set of relations into stranger and even more dizzying relief.

The Body of Nietzsche

One of the many plot twists in *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes* concerns the fact that Roberte encounters von A, who has been wounded, in her capacity as a Red Cross nurse. All of their intercourse takes place in a locale designated for the sick and in conjunction with von A's injured body. Because von A is immobile, he sends Roberte on the mission of desecrating the altar in order to uncover the hidden names. In this fashion, many of the story's complications result from von A's convalescent state.[31] The possibilities generated by a state of convalescence is a theme even more central to Klossowski's *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux* (1969). Klossowski's analysis of Nietzsche is unique in that it takes Nietzsche's ill health, as well as his letters describing his condition, as fundamental to an understanding of his philosophy. In this sense, the physical and the personal are part and parcel of the philosophical oeuvre. As Klossowski puts it, "[I]t may seem absurd to read Nietzsche's successive texts as so many 'migraines' inverted in words. Given the way Nietzsche was compelled to describe the various phases of his conscious states, however, he was

unable to avoid the mechanism of such an inversion."[32] Klossowski's study of Nietzsche works to decode this mechanism of inversion. Indeed, Klossowski characterized his approach as attuned to physiognomy and not to ideology.[33] Such an approach focuses on how the condition of being sick or convalescent enables new and altered states of being. These altered states might be called *becomings,* especially as they entail fundamental shifts in perception. Becomings reflect a new aesthetics of living, one perceived only from a vantage point that is exterior to the normal parameters of healthful living.

Nietzsche carefully documents these altered states, and Klossowski makes this the focus of *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux,* in which he fully reproduces many of Nietzsche's letters to friends, physicians, and family members. Most of these letters, written during periods of ill health, give detailed depictions of Nietzsche's physical and mental states. Not only are these states related, but indeed physical incapacity and pain enable previously unimagined levels of mental joy and freedom.[34] Nietzsche puts it thus in a letter written in January 1880 to Doctor O. Eiser:

> My existence is a *dreadful burden:* I would have rejected it long ago, had I not been making the most instructive experiments in the intellectual and moral domain in just this condition of suffering and almost complete renunciation—this joyous mood, avid for knowledge, raised me to heights where I triumphed over every torture and all despair. On the whole, I am happier now than I have ever been in my life. And yet, continual pain; for many hours of the day, a sensation closely akin to seasickness, a semiparalysis that makes it difficult to speak, alternating with furious attacks (the last one made me vomit for three days and nights, I longed for death!) . . . My only consolation is my thoughts and perspectives.[35]

As Klossowski glosses this passage, "[T]he act of thinking became identical with suffering, and suffering with thinking. From this fact, Nietzsche posited the *coincidence of thought with suffering,* and asked what a thought would be that was deprived of suffering. Thinking suffering, reflecting on past suffering—as *the impossibility of thinking*

—then came to be experienced by Nietzsche as the highest joy [*jouissance*]."[36] While all the forces of sickness would serve to withhold or deplete energy and lucidity, a counterforce is at work that responds with a new and enhanced form of lucidity. What results is an enabling disjunction—not unlike that outlined above with respect to Roberte and the pure soul / impure body—in which physical excess, here in the form of sickness, allows for an unprecedented mental purity and freedom. As with Roberte's body in *Les Lois de l'hospitalité,* the body once again serves as a medium for attaining altered mental states—states that would be impossible were it not for the inextricable conjunction of body and mind and, *at the same time,* the capacity to dissociate them. If there is one theme in all of Klossowski's oeuvre, it is this, and nowhere is it expressed more forcefully than in the study of Nietzsche.

Throughout his work, Klossowski underscores the disjunction between the body and the identity of the person, a disjunction in which the body can be instrumental in breaking down the identity of the person, and this in a positive and joyous fashion. With respect to the sick body, the mind unleashes thought-energy that runs contrary to the negating forces of the body's sickness. This thought-energy is the product of a disjunctive process of becoming, which Klossowski describes in exuberant terms:

> Nietzsche experienced this dissolving confrontation between somatic and spiritual forces for a long time, and he observed it passionately. The more he listened to his body, the more he came to distrust *the person the body supports.* His obsessive fear of suicide, born out of the despair that his atrocious migraines would never be cured, amounted to a condemnation of the body in the name of the person being diminished by it. . . . By studying the reactions of his nervous system, he would come to conceive of himself in a *different manner* than he had previously known—and indeed, in a manner that will perhaps never again be known. Consequently, he developed a mode of intelligence which he wanted to submit to exclusively physical criteria. He not only interpreted suffering as energy, but willed it to be so. Physical suffering would be livable only insofar as it was closely connected to joy, insofar as it devel-

> oped a voluptuous lucidity: either it would extinguish all possible thought, or it would reach the delirium of thought.[37]

The virtually unprecedented state that Nietzsche attains is achieved through a separation or oscillation between the body and the "person the body supports." This process of becoming is catalyzed by a mind-body disjunction, or more nearly the mind's separation from a body in some state of sickness or impurity. It must be stressed that sickness or impurity is *not* a negative state to be overcome but rather a positive enabler that is never actually separate from its thought counterpart. The change of state is that from a bodily sensation to a thought-sensation infused with corporeal energy. Such a becoming might be called an eroticization or a materialization of thought. It is thus all the more fitting that Klossowski frequently refers to Nietzsche's sickness-induced lucidity as "voluptuous lucidity." It seems that a similar voluptuous lucidity results from Roberte's repeated sexual encounters. While these are in one sense preeminently scripted heterosexual encounters, they are interesting in that the voluptuousness lies, not in the physical sex, but rather in the altered mental states that arise from the disjunction of bodies and identities.

Such a disjunction between the person and the body, a disjunction enabled by a somatic catalyst, is at issue in Klossowski's figuration of the woman and the Jew, and here most explicitly in his reading of Nietzsche's sickness. This framework might equally serve as the theoretical underpinning for this entire study, which seeks to analyze the laudatory exchanges between groupings of thinkers in terms of a radical disjunction between the persons of the thinkers in question and the corpus of their thought. This corpus is one that links physical or material states to the domain of thought, blending the physical and the material, yet eschewing the simple identity of the person. Klossowski best characterizes this process of disjunctively induced becoming when he writes that Nietzsche, "struggled at one and the same time with the to-and-fro movement of the impulses, and for a *new cohesion* between his thought and the body as a *corporealizing* thought."[38] Provoked by the body, thought ascends to a space where

it can revoke the body, but not without being energized by the body's very materiality. Materiality transported into the realm of thought permeates thought to such an extent that a new cohesion results, one where corporeal and spiritual materialities are no longer distinct. It is just this sort of new cohesion between personal and intellectual forces that is brought into being by the thought exchanges between Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski: distinct thinkers who at one and the same time form a singular corporealizing thought.

Klossowski on Deleuze

Given the applicability of a Klossowskian theoretical framework to the larger group dynamic, it is interesting, and somewhat ironic, to note that Klossowski's theory applies perhaps least forcefully to his own writing about the other thinkers in this grouping. Klossowski's writings on Deleuze do not have the excessive tone of Foucault's writings on Deleuze or of Blanchot's writings on Bataille; rather, they are marked by greater restraint and moderation. Most notably, they come in the form of dedications. First, there is the short fictional piece "Roberte et Gulliver," which is subtitled "Divertimento pour Gilles Deleuze" and which nowhere mentions Deleuze but instead entails the fictional encounter between Roberte and Swift's Gulliver. The character Santa-Sede from *Roberte ce soir* also makes a brief appearance, and this all takes place alongside the omnipresent Klossowskian evocation of the gesture.

More significant is the study of Nietzsche, which is very tellingly dedicated to Deleuze. While Deleuze's work is rarely addressed directly in *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux,* Klossowski nonetheless alludes to it with considerable frequency. For example, in the analysis of Nietzsche's sickness discussed above, Klossowski references Deleuze's work on Nietzsche without explicitly citing it. Klossowski does this by using the term *becoming*[39] to describe the dynamic between the body and thought, and also by using the Deleuzian notion of "active" and "reactive" forces.[40] Klossowski writes: "Nietzsche says that *we have no language to express what is in becoming.* Thought is always the

result of a momentary relation of power between impulses, principally between those that dominate and those that resist."[41] In expressing the production of thought as a function of a power relation between active and reactive forces, Klossowski echoes Deleuze's analysis of the power of reactive forces in *Nietzsche et la philosophie:*

> What Nietzsche calls an active force is one which goes to the limit of its consequences. An active force separated from what it can do by reactive force thus becomes reactive. But does not this reactive force, in its own way, go to the limit of what it can do? . . . A reactive force can certainly be considered from different points of view. Illness, for example, separates me from what I can do, as reactive force it makes me reactive, it narrows my possibilities and condemns me to a diminished milieu to which I can do no more than adapt myself. But in an other way, it reveals to me a new capacity, it endows me with a new will that I can make my own, going to the limit of a strange power. . . . Here we can recognise an ambivalence important to Nietzsche: all the forces whose reactive character he exposes are, a few lines or pages later, admitted to fascinate him, to be sublime because of the perspective they open up for us and because of the disturbing will to power to which they bear witness.[42]

In this passage Deleuze overturns the hierarchy between active and reactive forces, arguing with Nietzsche that the reactive force of sickness can be its own form of activity and can inaugurate new and interesting states of being.[43] Klossowski pushes Deleuze's reading still further by focusing even more squarely on the positive newness of the perspective opened by the reactive force of sickness. While Deleuze highlights this fascination with sickness as "an ambivalence important to Nietzsche," Klossowski makes this fascination the cornerstone of his exegesis of Nietzsche. Though Deleuze's tone is more muted—and Klossowski's more exuberant—Deleuze's and Klossowski's readings of Nietzsche nonetheless converge on the question of the sick body and its ability to open new perspectives and unleash new energies.

The exchanges between Deleuze and Klossowski are, more than any others in this study, displaced exchanges. It is through the medium of Nietzsche, and specifically the oppositional relation be-

tween bodily sickness and mental health expressed in Nietzsche's letters, that Deleuze and Klossowski engage most actively with each other. In this way, Nietzsche, like Roberte, is a medium of exchange between men. Just as Roberte actualizes the relationship between host and stranger in Klossowski's fiction, so too a Nietzschean framework of bodies and thoughts actualizes the literary-philosophical relation between Deleuze and Klossowski.

Deleuze on Klossowski

We can, in turn, take this lens afforded by Nietzsche and turn it back on Deleuze's two essays on Klossowski, and here specifically "Klossowski ou les corps-langage" ["Klossowski or Bodies-Language"]. The essay's title encapsulates the central disjunction between body and thought in the Klossowskian oeuvre, which Deleuze reads once again in terms of active and reactive forces that ultimately dislocate personal identity.[44] The forces are now called "provocation" and "revocation": "Does Klossowski simply mean that speaking prevents us from thinking about nasty things? No; the pure language which produces an impure silence is a *provocation* of the mind by the body; similarly, the impure language which produces a pure silence is a *revocation* of the body by the mind. . . . More precisely, what is revoked in the body? Klossowski's answer is that it is the integrity of the body, and that because of this the identity of the person is somewhat suspended and volatilized."[45] The body is once again central to this interplay of forces, whose ideal outcome is "pure silence," "the revocation of the body by the mind." Revocation, then, linked simultaneously to the body, the mind, Nietzsche, the woman, and the Jew (all of which are, at different points, both hailed and revoked)[46] is, for Klossowski, not a pejorative but a positive space of opening.

It is Deleuze who brings out this positivity in Klossowski most forcefully. Just as Deleuze shows that the Nietzschean reactive forces are capable of working toward the most exhilarating of ends, so too does Deleuze transcribe all that Klossowski revokes into a positive force. For Deleuze, Klossowski's depiction of oppositional extremes

surpasses the realm of dialectics and negativity and instead inaugurates its own realm of positive purities, which might also be called intensities. Deleuze notes how "the couple Octave-Roberte refers to a pure difference of intensity in thought; the names 'Octave' and 'Roberte' no longer designate things; they now express pure intensities, risings and falls."[47] Octave and Roberte are not merely opposites caught up in a dialectical logic; rather, they are disjointed thought-entities that, in the affirmation of this disjunction, paradoxically assume a uniquely positive presence.[48]

In this way, Deleuze's positive recuperation of "revocation" parallels his affirmative reading of what he terms Klossowski's "disjunctive synthesis." In its affirmative plenitude, Deleuze's concept of the disjunctive synthesis is entirely at odds with the disjunctive syntheses of both Oedipus and Kant. In the Oedipal structure, the family triangle represents three disjointed terms brought into a synthesis of sorts. Yet because each term must of necessity retain its relational identity within the triangle, such a structure is, according to Deleuze, "an exclusive, restrictive, and negative use of the disjunctive synthesis."[49] Likewise, Kant's presentation of God as the master of the disjunctive syllogism in *The Critique of Pure Reason* is equally restrictive. As the guarantor of all possibility, God encompasses both the reality of a thing and all that is excluded by that reality. Yet because this operates by a principle of exclusion, the Kantian notion of God can only be recuperated in the realm of the negative. According to Deleuze, it is as critique of both Oedipus and Kant that Klossowski's diabolical version of God proves so incisive. Deleuze stresses how, in Klossowski,

> the disjunctive syllogism accedes to a diabolical principle and use, and simultaneously the disjunction is affirmed for itself without ceasing to be a disjunction; divergence or difference become objects of pure affirmation, and "either-or" becomes the power of affirmation, outside the conceptual conditions of the identity of a God, a world, or a self. Dilemma and solecism[50] acquire as such a superior positivity. . . . But it is precisely inside God's order, and only there, that disjunctions have the negative value of exclusion. And it is on the other side, inside the order of the Antichrist, that

> the disjunction (difference, divergence, decentering) becomes as such an affirmative and affirmed power.[51]

Klossowski's theater of opposition works to seemingly contradictory ends. In delineating disjunctive, oppositional extremes, Klossowski effects, not the affirmation of the dialectic, but instead the very dissolution of the self. While Oedipus and the Kantian God would maintain the identity of the self, Klossowski's Antichrist, or Baphomet, works in opposition to such processes of identification. While God would guarantee identity by making each body correspond to a soul, the Baphomet overthrows such a construction by forcing a multiplicity of souls into a single body, to the point where the boundaries between body and soul, or body and thought, are no longer relevant.[52] Although in my opinion Deleuze imputes an overly negative vision of God to Klossowski—just how far Klossowski's theology has moved away from God and toward the Antichrist is a matter of some debate—what is important is that the net result entails a complete reevaluation of the principles of identity.

Such a massive breakdown of identity, which Deleuze locates in Klossowski's oppositional extremes, could of course be said to characterize the very encounter between Deleuze and Klossowski. This is not merely an encounter between two individuals, for there are always more than two individuals in question (it is never *just* Deleuze and Klossowski, but instead Deleuze and Klossowski *and* Nietzsche *and* Foucault, etc.). Even more profoundly, it is not as individuals that Deleuze and Klossowski speak to each other, for between them there are always more than two, but rather as the embodiment of intensified thought itself. Through this network of laudatory writings, Deleuze and Klossowski themselves converge as a thought-intensity around the force field of the sick body, while at the same time maintaining unique philosophical tonalities that serve as their space of disjunction from one another. Such a space of disjunction is best located around the signifier "God," which, once again, is a definitively negative term for Deleuze and to my mind much more ambivalent for Klossowski.

This dynamic of disjunctive synthesis parallels in much more subtle fashion the one that obtains between Octave and Roberte. As extreme opposites in a heterosexual union, Octave and Roberte on the one hand embody all that is most pernicious in patriarchal hierarchies. Yet, from another perspective, when considered as disembodied intensities, enabled like Nietzsche's extraordinary visions by a distinct form of corporealizing thought, Roberte and Octave—above all Roberte—become something altogether different. This something, not exactly a person and not exactly a pure spirit, might be described best as an incitement or provocation toward thought. This thought, whose newness is always unexpected, materializes like the Hunchback who comes to accost Roberte, just at the moment where it is both most provoked and least anticipated.

6 *Objects, Reserve, and the General Economy*

Klossowski, Bataille, and Sade

The phenomenon of ecstatic laudatory exchange—five French philosophers writing encomia about one another—has thus far been mapped out according to a logic of twofold exchange: Bataille and Blanchot, Blanchot and Foucault, Foucault and Deleuze, Deleuze and Klossowski. While this organization would seem to underscore the binary, symmetrical, and dialectical aspects of these exchanges, the exchanges themselves are anything but evenly balanced. As we have seen in the four preceding analyses, these conversations are always dialogues among *many,* the many that at every moment includes all five philosophers and others as well. Yet beyond this, each exchange also entails a dissolution of identity, abolishing the distinction between commentator and commentee, interlocutor and respondent, subject and object. This is a mode of thought where differences and differentials paradoxically lead to a relentless repetition of the same formal thematics. These thematics involve the favoring of certain affective qualities over others: impersonality over personality, chatter over serious speech, the absence of work over the work's aesthetically unified presence, the impure body in conjunction with the pure mind over the impure mind / pure body conjunction.

Despite the different topics and thinkers at issue in any given exchange, there is a common engagement (and even a playfulness) in enacting philosophy as a *mode of affective intensity* rather than producing language that corresponds to philosophical truths. Whatever truth there is to be found resides in the *form* of these exchanges and not in their explicit content. Another characteristic of this form is that the affective intensity it carries with it is never fully balanced and reciprocal. Deleuze, for example, writes about Foucault with a sense of poignancy and longing that is unmatched by Foucault. Such an unevenness of affective intensity has nothing to do with scholarly rigor or one-upmanship; it is not a question of outthinking the other thinker by a superior critique or of producing a thought that is more original. It is this absence of critique that enables thought to arise in between thinkers, texts, objects—which are finally not entirely distinguishable from each other—and to arise freely precisely because thought is not trying to rigorously produce itself.

The aim of this chapter is to recast this set of laudatory exchanges as an economics of thought exchange. Here the unevenness of affective intensity belongs to another kind of economy, one that scorns checks and balances and runs according to a constant expenditure of exorbitant energies—energies that are not easily translated into classical economic terms. Such a system has been variously characterized as a libidinal economy,[1] a symbolic economy,[2] or as a schizophrenic logic of desiring-machines.[3] Although I will not be using these categories explicitly, but instead using ones put forth by Klossowski and Bataille, all of the formulations in question are linked by a common preoccupation with nonequivalent or nonreciprocal economics. Specifically, I will propose Klossowski's system of living currency and Bataille's system of general economy as models for recasting and elucidating the dynamic of philosophical exchange outlined thus far. While the heterodox economic theories of Klossowski and Bataille serve as interesting explanatory models for the mode of laudatory philosophical exchange in question, they rather ironically fail at just that point where one would expect them to best succeed—the critical exchanges between Klossowski and Bataille themselves.

Klossowski's Living Currency

Klossowski outlines his system of living currency in *La Monnaie vivante,*[4] a genre-defying book that is part economic analysis and part pseudo-pornographic photography and illustration. Interspersed with the essay-length treatise on economics is a series of around eighty photographs and drawings of "Roberte" (portrayed by Klossowski's wife, Denise Morin-Sinclaire). Some of the scenes depicted in the photographs and drawings—such as the ones where Roberte's hands are tied to two parallel bars, where Roberte accosts a young clerk, or where "pure breaths" materialize to attack Roberte—issue directly from his hospitality trilogy. Another series of photographs (all done by Pierre Zucca) appears to depict some sort of elaborately staged medieval initiation rite. Here the Roberte figure, helmet on head and sword in hand, is posed in an array of highly dramatized action poses. There is no explicit relationship between the text and the photographs (in fact, the 1993 re-edition of *La Monnaie vivante* dispenses with the photographs entirely).

In the text of *La Monnaie vivante,* Klossowski emphasizes how the institutional logic of commodity exchange, with money as currency, cannot be thought of apart from another economic system, one that traffics in emotional *pulsions,*[5] intensities, and phantasms and that has as its currency living bodies. While an industrial economy would seek to silence the libidinal and "pulsional" investments that make possible its functioning, Klossowski makes these *pulsions* the very currency of his otherly defined economy:

> One should imagine for an instant an apparently impossible regression: that is an industrial phase where the producers have the means to demand, in the name of payment, objects of sensation on the part of the consumers. These objects are living beings. According to this example of barter, producers and consumers thereby constitute collections of "persons" allegedly designed for pleasure, emotion, sensation. How can the human "person" fulfill the function of currency? . . . What we are saying here in fact exists. For without literally returning to barter, all of modern industry rests on an exchange mediated by the sign of inert currency,

> neutralizing the nature of the objects exchanged; rests, that is, on a simulacrum of exchange—a simulacrum which lies in the form of manpower resources, thus a living currency, not affirmed as such, already extant.[6]

We have, on the one hand, a reversal of accepted economic laws of exchange, laws that govern the way objects as well as human services are produced and sold via the medium of money. The Klossowskian economy rests instead on an altogether different base, one where "pulsional" forces ultimately determine that which would appear as a purely mercantile economy. Klossowski writes that "bodily presence is already a commodity, independent of and *in addition to* the commodity that this presence helps to produce."[7] Traffic in live bodies would thus not be just an effect of a market economy but instead the driving force, and an excessive one, of its very existence. But here it is not just a question of supplanting one base-superstructure model with another, but instead of abolishing the distinction between the two. For the body is ultimately no more than a fleeting point of configuration for a network of disparate *pulsions;* a body does not belong to an individual who exerts control over it, but instead results from a series of interrelated forces over which it has no control. In this regard, Klossowski's call to "abolish the ownership of the body"[8] is not only one that demands a reversal of classical economic theories but also one that proposes a reenvisioning of the entire system of human/nonhuman and subject/object relations on which such theories are based.[9]

In order to understand Klossowski's desubjectified and object-centered system of "pulsional" economics, it is necessary to outline the complicated distinction he makes between the *phantasm* and the *simulacrum.* Such a distinction might indeed be considered the central thematic of all of Klossowski's oeuvre. In broaching the question of the phantasm, we might recall the analyses in the preceding chapter of the "pure breaths" that visit Roberte in *Roberte ce soir* and of the list of names hidden in the altar in *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes.* Both of these entities are phantasmatic in that they do not exist absolutely as material substances but contain the potential for being

transformed into such. The pure breaths materialize only for Roberte to witness and only upon great provocation. The names purportedly correspond to Jewish children but are potentially not even names at all but instead the documentation of an incestuous relationship; furthermore, the very existence of anything hidden away in the altar may be a fabulous construction of von A's imagination. Because the pure breaths and the hidden names cannot be precisely pinpointed or localized, they exist as phantasms in Klossowski's strange world. Yet the fact that these entities are treated by other characters as *knowable* and *approximable* means that these characters construct a *simulacrum* of phantasmatic objects that are definitionally unknowable. Although the simulacrum always compromises the purity of the phantasm, it is nonetheless interesting for the way in which it carries out this compromise. For example, even if there are no names of Jewish children in the altar, these names-as-simulacra give the already outlandish narrative new and twisted resonances.

Jean-François Lyotard explains this distinction between phantasm and simulacrum (with reference to Klossowski's *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux*) in a more philosophical and less literary fashion. I quote his exceptional formulation of this distinction at length:

> Apart from, and no less real than, phantasms (Klossowski never doubts the real) there are verbal, plastic or written transcriptions of these phantasms, there are artifacts which *count as* inexchangeable phantasms. Here then is the *exclusive* relation that Klossowski admits between the voluptuousness object and its simulacrum: "If the phantasm is . . . in fact a singular case—to defend it against *institutional* signification given it by the gregarious group, the singular case cannot but have recourse to the simulacrum: that is a *counting-as* its phantasm—so it is for a fraudulent exchange between the *singular* case and the *gregarious* generality. . . . The singular case disappears as such from the moment it *signifies* what *it is for itself;* in the individual it is only his *species case* which assures his intelligibility. Not only does it disappear as such as soon as it formulates its own phantasm: for it cannot do so save through *instituted signs* —but it cannot be reconstituted by these signs without thereby excluding from itself all that becomes *intelligible* in it, exchangeable."

> The simulacrum, because it is communicable (perhaps even destined to communicate the intransmittability of the phantasm), introduces exchangeability: therefore it is money, a sign, it *counts as something other* than its own material and arrangement, and it is devoted to circulation.[10]

According to Lyotard, the difference between the phantasm and the simulacrum lies in the difference between singularity and generality and between inexchangeability and exchangeability. While the phantasm is singular and inexchangeable, the simulacrum would try to "count as," to make itself exchangeable with the phantasm. In other words, it would try to introduce an economy of reciprocal exchange where such an economy is constitutionally impossible.

Klossowski complicates this model of phantasm and simulacrum still further by overlaying it with the more common distinction between subject and object. Whereas the subject would be considered more unique and singular, and the object as merely a medium of exchange or equivalence, Klossowski overturns this distinction in *La Monnaie vivante* by showing how subject and object can both function either as phantasm or as simulacrum. He notes that even the most utilitarian of objects can be charged with emotional value, whereas the most seemingly pure "pulsional" forces can serve as utilitarian tools. Objects, by having a specific and concrete use value, would seem to be far removed from the realm of the phantasm; yet insofar as they approximate a pure use value, they simultaneously take on a phantasmatic aura. However, in approximating an essence of nonsimulation (they are what they are, only to be used and nothing else), they betray themselves, becoming, as it were, the simulacrum of nonsimulation. Likewise, the simulacrum undergoes a comparable role reversal: in serving as a "tool" for the passions, the simulacrum takes on a specific use value. It is thus no longer a pure simulacrum but rather a "simulated simulacrum."[11]

Alain Arnaud translates this breakdown of the subject/object distinction into even more explicit economic terms when he writes in a gloss of *La Monnaie vivante:*

> Thus in the industrial sphere, which is in principle subject to the laws of profit, there exists a portion that is free of charge, that of wasteful experimentation; and conversely, impulsive life can be the object of negotiation. The most implemental objects can be invested with emotion, can provoke phantasms, voluptuousness. And the most singular and free pulsions can be reduced to an order that interprets them in terms of utility and profit. Klossowski frequently illustrated this ambiguity. He knew how to play one network off against the other, using phantasms as currency, investing the most commercial object with an emotive and symbolic charge, perverting the economy of needs and usages with that of free charge and inutility.[12]

According to this logic, an exchange in customary value takes place: the object becomes a purer phantasm than the subject, the subject a more useful simulacrum than the object. From this perspective, no set of values is absolute, and any thing or being can be potentially used as currency in exchange for any other. In this system, there is no gold standard or object with stable value. If anything, emotional and physical *pulsions* serve as the driving standards.

Such a logic is, once again, not merely one of straightforward reversals, but an effort at reconceptualizing the very distinction between subject and object. Such a distinction—or, more nearly, lack of one—is best articulated from the viewpoint of the object. As Klossowski writes, "A purely analogical relation leads to nothing, if one does not start from the point of view of *objects* and *needs* in order to detect the struggle of affects against their *inadequate formulation, materially* reconverted *to the state of a demand for goods* which only corresponds to them in a perverse way."[13] Objects are never merely goods, but inasmuch as a subject can have a point of view, they too have their distinct perspectives. Objects are at once acted upon and actor, betrayed and betrayer. They are betrayed in that they are never given an adequate formulation from the so-called subjects, yet they are all the more betrayers in that they always *exceed* any formulation they could possibly have. They are, for all their materiality, simultaneously immaterial and phantasmatic. They have the potential to be

"a sign of *what does not exist*" and that which is "*in itself nothing but a phantasm that responds to a phantasm.*"[14] These formulations are none other than Klossowski's definitions of money,[15] which are all the more evocative when extended to the realm of all objects, a realm that in turn implicates all supposed subjects.

To return to the laudatory exchanges at hand, Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski might now be categorized as "pulsional" forces rather than subjects, or as objects that are simulacra of each other. In writing of each other, they write not as subjects dissecting what they presume to be an object, but as the betrayed objects themselves, taking the subject—which is no longer a subject—like a loved one in the moment of capture. What they evince is love for the other in the way only an object can love, an object that silently knows that both it and the subject are made of the same stuff, yet for this knowledge expects nothing in return. Or, to express it in terms of phantasms and simulacra, it is the phantasm willfully embracing the language to which it must succumb, the simulacrum it must become, in order to reach out to the other side of the same phantasm that it has miraculously recognized in itself. All of which is to say, in another form, that this mode of writing is one that obliterates subjects in favor of a "pulsional," objectival energy that comes out as a sheer excess of laudatory text. Moreover, to extend the economic analogy, the use value of these texts comes out in terms of *pulsions* emitted and phantasms evoked and not as a simulacrum of useful knowledge. As we saw with respect to Deleuze and Foucault, there is an absence of work at the heart of these exchanges, an absence of productive expenditure.

This overturning of values can be extended to the text itself, to the actual words on the page. While it would appear that the physical words on the page are but a *medium* of conveying the great objectival intensity that marks this configuration of thought, the words themselves are just as energetically charged, just as inseparable from the *pulsions* they evoke. As Lyotard writes with respect to Klossowski, "The fraud here is that under the pretext of rendering the phantasm communicable, and translating it into signs and syntax, these are the figures of language which will in their turn receive their libidinal

charge. . . . The signs which the pen traces on the paper are not simply means of communicating an emotion which is outside them, and which would be, so to speak, lost due to the fact that it was written . . . , but these written signs being simultaneously, by themselves, not in spite of but by dint of and in proportion to their rigidity and invariance, products of phantasmatic consumption."[16]

A perfect illustration of the phantasmatic power of actual words on the page is the footnote written by Deleuze in "Theatrum Philosophicum," Foucault's exceedingly laudatory review of Deleuze's *Différence et répétition* and *Logique du sens.* At the end of a section where Foucault compares the production of a thought to the effects of certain drugs, there suddenly appears a footnote by Deleuze where he asks, "What will people think of us?"[17] These words on the page *are* the markings of a "pulsional" space that is usually occluded, for they unmask the real presence of Deleuze that permeates every letter of the text. By appearing in a spot that was not expected, the force field that is Deleuze also reveals itself to have been everywhere all along. By laying claim to several inches of text, inches that take on a dramatic libidinal charge for their very scarcity, the Deleuze "effect" simultaneously displays the invisible charge with which every other inch of "Theatrum Philosophicum" is exploding. Like the "pure breaths" in Klossowski's novel *Roberte ce soir,* who inflict obscene punishments on Roberte's body so that she will take note of the ways in which she unwittingly objectifies the pure breaths due to their nature as simple substances,[18] so too this footnote attests to the objectification process to which words on the page are submitted.

The very notion of the footnote is the textual enactment of classical subject-object economics, and the overturning of this economy is a text of all objects, of all footnotes. It is a text where the object becomes subject, where the simulacrum approaches its own phantasm. It has been said that all of Western philosophy is a footnote to Plato. Put into Klossowskian perspective, this statement is no longer pejorative but instead intimates a kind of philosophical sublime—the weaving of thought as a series of pure footnotes. And this is nowhere better illustrated than in the laudatory writings of Bataille, Blanchot,

Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski. It is as self-declared objects, as footnotes to the other, that these thinkers present themselves. In doing so, they instantiate a new form of objectival economics, one where the "pulsional" force of their statements is the primary currency and the material tangibility of their words on the page is the locus of exchange.

Bataille's General Economy

A related and much more widely disseminated economic system is that of Georges Bataille.[19] Bataille's system is based on a glorification of unproductive expenditure. As opposed to classical political economy (a "restricted economy" modeled after a conservation of energy principle, a closed system of equal and opposite reactions), Bataille proposes the "general economy," one that takes the complete squandering of excess energy as its basis. The idea of the general economy is rooted in the "*need for limitless loss,* which exists endemically in a social group."[20] Instead of assuming a basic drive toward a conservation of resources (a restricted economy), Bataille's general economy assumes just the opposite—that, with the limitless energy of the sun as the driving motor, there is always more energy produced than can be dealt with rationally.[21] Thus, "*the general economy* . . . makes apparent that *excesses of energy are produced, which by definition, cannot be utilized. The excessive energy can only be lost without the slightest aim, consequently without any meaning.*"[22]

Mirroring the distinction between restricted and general economy is the Bataillean distinction between homogeneity and heterogeneity. Based on a model of useful social production, "*homogeneity* signifies . . . the commensurability of elements and the awareness of this commensurability."[23] The heterogeneous, which exists as "a split-off structure"[24] of the homogeneous yet for this is all the more encompassing, "includes everything resulting from *unproductive* expenditure."[25] The homogeneous does not recognize the heterogeneous as such, and in this it performs much the same operation of censorship as that of the conscious upon the unconscious.[26]

The difficult negotiation between the homogeneous and the heterogeneous (or between the restricted and the general economy) is perhaps best illustrated, yet again, by the very entity of money itself. Bataille writes that "the common denominator, the foundation of social *homogeneity* and of the activity arising from it, is money."[27] By this definition, money would work to guarantee the restricted world of homogeneity. However, as Bataille writes in "L'Economie à la mesure de l'univers," "Money . . . is but a form of energy."[28] Money is thereby the locus of a fundamental contradiction. While serving as the supreme representative of a restricted system, one in which its function is that of safeguarding and facilitating the ideal of equal exchange, money is, in itself, nothing but energy, and excessive energy at that. In defining a field of homogeneity, money in itself is a sign of sheer excess, one that is so excessive as to approximate the absolutely intangible, nothingness itself, heterogeneity par excellence.[29]

To turn to the laudatory exchanges at hand, writing, like money for Bataille, is both the hallmark of a restricted economy and one of its most outrageous excesses. The written text as a medium for exchange of thought is in some sense a homogeneous tool for the maintenance of a restricted economy of intellectual exchange (I write a nice piece about you, you in turn write one about me, and we enhance our individual symbolic capital and that of the intellectual field in general).[30] Yet such a view both assumes the transparency of the text—that is, neglects the "pulsional" force of the words-as-objects on the page—and fails to consider the energy differential involved. While the writings of Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski about each other are on one level a supreme exercise in mutually congratulatory exchange, they are, both individually and collectively, so replete with energy imbalances and excesses that the text is at best an insufficient and thus all the more poignant trace of an energy expended without reserve, one that is irretrievably lost and beautifully irreparable.[31] It is the energy of excessive repetition that can only be expressed as chatter, as useless expenditure, as absence of work.

This general economy of textual excess is carried out on different yet overlapping levels in the exchanges discussed thus far, the crucial

link being that of pronounced energy imbalances. Turning once again to Foucault and Deleuze, we find that each utters excessive laudatory pronouncements about the other but in notably different styles. Foucault, on the one hand, makes an extraordinary statement and leaves it hanging, never to be rearticulated or fully explained. Such is the case when he writes at the beginning of "Theatrum Philosophicum" that "perhaps one day, this century will be known as Deleuzian."[32] Deleuze, by contrast, speaks more quietly, with a sort of calm reserve: yet by repeating these quiet encomia in interviews, lectures, and essays, he brings the discourse, by sheer dint of repetition, to a frenetic pitch. In this regard, Deleuze's steady expenditure of Foucault-centered energy far exceeds the momentary (though momentous) outbursts of Foucault's Deleuzian enunciations, which are themselves preeminent illustrations of pure expenditure, delirious praise taken to its limit (how can the concept of a Deleuzian century ever be practically recuperated?).[33] Ultimately, however, it is impossible to compare the relative energy imbalances of the Foucault-Deleuze economy because the defining feature of this economy resides in the irrecuperable loss of boundaries between the entity Foucault and the entity Deleuze. By speaking with the other and through the other's terminology so that it becomes one's own, the difference between one thinker and the other is no longer measurable in terms of one distinct person versus another. At issue is a variable multiplicity of articulations of the Same. Such an economy that breaks down boundaries of distinct personhood is a general economy of thought.

The Klossowski-Bataille Impasse

Given the applicability of both a Klossowskian economy of phantasms and simulacra and a Bataillean general economy to the exchanges between Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski, one would expect to find the preeminent illustration of these economic models in Bataille and Klossowski's writings about each other. This, as we shall see, is precisely *not* the case. Indeed, we might categorize Bataille and Klossowski's writings about each other as the

exception that proves the rule. There are, to be sure, moments of high praise comparable to the delirious laudatory mode of the four previous sets of exchanges: in a 1985 interview, Klossowski admits that "Bataille was such a powerful presence that it cannot be denied, at first glance, that he had an extraordinary influence over me";[34] in "Hors des limites," Bataille writes of Klossowski's *Roberte ce soir* that "it would be vain to look for a precedent," that it is a "seductive monster," a case of "thought leaving its limits."[35] Yet as a whole, the exchanges between Klossowski and Bataille fall into a restricted economy of thought where they engage in debates over theological minutiae and consequently fail to read each other on the other's terms.

Klossowski and Bataille enter into a theological debate that could be framed according to the question of reversible expenditure. While Bataille advocates an irreversible expenditure that is figured by the headless body, or *acéphale,* Klossowski takes issue with the way such an image denies the presence of God. In "Le Corps du néant," Klossowski draws an analogy between the headless body and the church without God, arguing that God (the head) is necessary for full communication between the members of the body (humanity).[36] In other words, it is necessary that there be reversibility between the head and the body, a balanced expenditure of energy, one taking its form in the Resurrection, the signal of the return of the head, the restoring to balance of the energy flow that was disrupted by the death of God on Good Friday. Such a position is in direct confrontation with the image of the *acéphale,* which depicts a headless body spewing forth its contents from the orifice of the headless neck, thus visually representing a Bataillean preoccupation with excess and irreversible expenditure.

Klossowski later recants this position, and in the second version of *Sade mon prochain* (1967) replaces the "Corps du néant" essay with a new one entitled "Le Philosophe scélérat," which stresses, instead of the death of God, the importance of "integral sodomy" in Sade.[37] As Jane Gallop notes in *Intersections,* Klossowski has moved from an anti-Bataillean position that contests unrequited expenditure—the death of God—to espouse a position that embraces such unproduc-

tive expenditure, this time in the realm of sodomy. Here, sodomy represents unproductive expenditure as opposed to sex that has the possibility of producing offspring. As Gallop writes, "At Golgotha God dies on Holy Friday, but that death is teleologically subordinate to the Resurrection and salvation for the human race. Penile-vaginal intercourse is expenditure of energy in the service of the human race, death for the sake of birth. Anal intercourse spends energy uselessly ('a Holy Friday against any paschal apprehension')."[38] While such a formulation begs many questions about the viability of articulating general economy in specifically sexual-economic terms, it nonetheless underscores the way questions of reversibility and excess expenditure, especially as they are transposed onto theological issues, are at the heart of Klossowski and Bataille's textual confrontations.

Although both Klossowski and Bataille may be said to arrive at the valorization of useless expenditure—Bataille from the beginning and Klossowski in the course of his engagement with Bataille[39]—such an orientation is hardly enacted at a textual level. Unlike all the previous examples (Bataille-Blanchot, Blanchot-Foucault, Foucault-Deleuze, Deleuze-Klossowski), the exchange between Klossowski and Bataille conforms to a remarkably restricted textual economy, one that might be characterized as an exercise in theological correctness or as a stubborn attempt to mold the other to one's own terminology (an activity that reinforces the subject-object boundary), as opposed to letting oneself be taken by the other's terminology. Theirs is a dynamic of textual exchange that is best described by the locution tit for tat.

Klossowski's "Le Corps du néant" puts a theological corrective on Bataille's notion of the *acéphale.* Klossowski argues that this headless body, which Bataille associates with the death of God, is more nearly a Church of the Death of God or, in short, the very sort of religious structure that Bataille is at pains to attack. Moreover, because there is no head, "the Church of the Death of God alienates precisely that which gives life to the mystical Body: the voluntary sacrifice of the head which constitutes the Resurrection of the entire body."[40] Klossowski also diagnoses Bataille's malady: "His *acéphality* finally only expresses the malady of a guilt which consciousness has alienated by

plunging faith into sleep."[41] To put it simply, Bataille is an astute reader of Sade and Nietzsche, but his lack of faith prevents him from an ultimate understanding.

Aimé Patri presents an even more grandiose reading of Klossowski's critique of Bataille. In a 1947 article in *L'Arche,* he proposes that all of Klossowski's *Sade mon prochain* is actually a disguised work on Bataille—the confirmation being that Bataille is the subject of the final chapter, "Le Corps du néant"—which has as its ultimate goal the saving of a lost friend: Georges Bataille.[42] While such an argument is somewhat audacious, it does point to Klossowski's unmistakable imperative to do something to Bataille, to set him right, to rectify his impertinent atheology. Whereas the previous four sets of exchanges are more properly exegetical in that they do not seek to alter the other but rather to employ his own terms so as to read alongside him, Klossowski's piece works to revision or re-theologize Bataille in an explicitly corrective and unexegetical fashion.[43]

Bataille responds in kind to Klossowski in a two-part piece that appeared later the same year in *Critique.*[44] "Le Secret de Sade," a review of Sade's *Les 120 Journées de Sodome, Les Infortunes de la vertu,* and the latter's new introduction by Jean Paulhan, is also ostensibly reviewing Klossowski's *Sade mon prochain,* though it barely mentions Klossowski. Like Klossowski on Bataille, Bataille is far from dismissive of Klossowski, indeed acknowledging the merit of his work, yet choosing to engage it on a predominantly corrective level. This correctiveness comes out not so much by considered analysis as by choice deployments of diction, by the meting out on a minute scale of what is wrong or right. Bataille begins with several highly critical swipes at Klossowski, asserting that "Klossowski has painted a somewhat contrived portrait of the author of *Justine*," that "Klossowski's studies are very Hegelian, but they lack Hegel's rigour," and that "Klossowski draws too hasty a conclusion from a brilliant passage in *La Philosophie dans le boudoir.*"[45] Klossowski gains ground on the next page, where Bataille concedes that "Klossowski rightly says" and then proceeds to quote a long passage by him. However, in the middle of the passage, where Klossowski writes that "the romantic soul

. . . is no more than a nostalgic state of faith," Bataille interjects a footnote that reads "I do not share this reservation."[46] Such a footnote only underscores the fastidious and condescending distancing maneuvers that are dramatized in this exchange between Klossowski and Bataille. Whereas Deleuze's footnote in "Theatrum Philosophicum" brings into relief the very real Deleuzian presence in the text, Bataille's footnote-within-a-citation highlights the infinite separation of two doggedly persistent subjects locked in a theological sparring match.

Notably, there is much less of a tit-for-tat dynamic in later Klossowski-Bataille engagements, especially after Klossowski's theological shift in the early 1950s from an explicitly Christian perspective to a more Nietzschean though nonetheless similarly articulated celebration of the breakdown of identity. Klossowski's critique of Bataille appears to undergo a comparable shift. Instead of attacking Bataille on religious grounds, Klossowski (in a 1985 interview with Jean-Maurice Monnoyer) makes subtle jabs at Bataille on political grounds. Although never saying it in so many words, Klossowski essentially attacks Bataille for being too much of a capitalist. He comments, for example, that "no one, finally, was more anticommunist than Bataille" and "in the worst sense, Bataille realized these predictions: he remained an anarchist who fell back into capitalism while the marxism all around him was characterized by powerlessness."[47] Whether the terms are religious or political, Klossowski seems to be responding to an exigency to maintain a distinction between himself and Bataille.

Although the later exchanges between Klossowski and Bataille are more positive, what remains consistent is each man's imperative to approach the other by means of his own—and not the other's—terminology. Thus, in his 1950 article "La Messe de Georges Bataille," which is less overtly proselytizing in tone, Klossowski nevertheless reads Bataille's novel *L'Abbé C* as a profound treatise on a particularly Klossowskian theme: acquiring spiritual purification by way of drastic mortification of the flesh.[48] Klossowski's last article on Bataille, "A propos du simulacre dans la communication de Georges Bataille,"

which appeared in *Critique*'s 1963 commemorative issue on Bataille (who died in 1962) takes a newfound stance against both theology *and* rational atheism (both of which Bataille fortunately escapes) while still encompassing Bataille under a new and specifically Klossowskian rubric, the simulacrum.[49]

Bataille's only other piece on Klossowski, "Hors des limites" (1954), goes the furthest in escaping this genre of critical corrective and insistence on one's own terminology. Though still appealing to his own—and not Klossowski's—notions of "evil," of "eroticism," and of the "sacred," Bataille lets Klossowski speak at length by quoting a long dialogue from *Roberte ce soir* and not intervening, and he concludes with the laudatory vision, cited above, of "thought leaving its limits." Bataille, then, would seem to be the lesser and certainly the less prolific aggressor in this struggle to correct the other thinker and to subsume his terminology.

There exists, yet again, an imbalanced energy expenditure—Klossowski writes more on Bataille than Bataille does on Klossowski—but one that, unlike the previous examples, is placed under the sign of a restricted economy. It is not a question of an imbalanced conversation overturning traditional subject-object positions via an immanent expenditure of "pulsional" energy. To be sure, there is energy unleashed in the Klossowski-Bataille exchange, but it is expended in the service of a form of critique that privileges original and individual thought. There is nothing akin to the form of radical encomium that we have seen in the other exchanges, a delirium of praise that would serve to dismantle originality and critique. Unlike the heterogeneous configurations of Bataille-Blanchot, Blanchot-Foucault, Foucault-Deleuze, and Deleuze-Klossowski, that of Klossowski-Bataille mirrors a classical restricted economy of critical exchange.

The larger question is thus how to account for such a pocket of homogeneity or restriction in an otherwise singularly heterogeneous or general economy. One response would be an appeal to chronological histories. Of the larger constellation of Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski, the encounter between Klossowski and Bataille was the first. According to Klossowski, the two

met in 1934[50] (Bataille and Blanchot did not meet until 1940). During these prewar years, Klossowski and Bataille both took part in the small review *Acéphale* (1936–39) as well as the larger and more public College of Sociology (1937–39),[51] Klossowski in a much more sporadic fashion. It might be argued that the politics of these organizations, and the type of dialogue they promoted, established or even necessitated the restricted economy of written exchange under which these two friends worked and that, by belonging to an earlier era, their mode of communication could only develop according to a more traditional framework of critical exchange.

Perhaps one could go further and assert that it is *because* Klossowski and Bataille provided such a catalyst that an unrestricted mode of group expenditure was facilitated. That is, as thinkers of the "outside" who chose to maintain the established forms of critical exchange, they thereby unleashed an entire mode of delirious exegetical writing to which their individual encounter did not belong. Such a chronological explanation raises as many questions as it explains, but it is useful in characterizing the Klossowski-Bataille exchange as a catalyst in a larger nuclear reaction. Perhaps this exchange might be fashioned as a pocket of imbalance, a pocket of reserve that is necessary to the maintenance of the larger general economy. As Bataille often reminds us, the general economy does not issue from nowhere, but issues otherwise from an established restricted economy. In this regard, Klossowski and Bataille mark a disjunction of theory and practice that enables a larger and more absolute interpenetration of the two.

By way of conclusion, it is interesting to map out such a model along the lines of work that has been done in the field of chaos theory. In *Order Out of Chaos,* Ilya Prigogene and Isabelle Stengers describe a "dissipative structure," a pocket of increased order in a system that is on an overall course tending toward disorder: "We now know that far from equilibrium, new types of structures may originate spontaneously. In far-from-equilibrium conditions we may have transformation from disorder, from thermal chaos, into order. New dynamic states of matter may originate, states that reflect the interac-

tion of a given system with its surroundings. We have called these new structures *dissipative structures* to emphasize the constructive role of dissipative processes in their formation."[52] While the delirious configuration of five French intellectuals praising each other is in many ways a dissipative structure in its own right—an explosion of nonsubjectified chaos out of a nicely reversible order of subject and object boundaries—it is interesting instead to envision it as a moment of even greater order, the order of the singularity of absolute expenditure, of absolute laudatory excess. Perhaps we could say, then, that this greater order is driven, at least in part, by the incompatibility in theory and practice of two of its most decisive elements, Klossowski and Bataille, whose theories of "pulsional" expenditure and general economy are of the greatest descriptive usefulness for delineating the larger group dynamic, yet fail to be descriptively accurate when applied to their proper dynamic.

The coupling of Klossowski and Bataille marks the point at which the perfect circle thus far mapped out (Bataille-Blanchot, Blanchot-Foucault, Foucault-Deleuze, Deleuze-Klossowski) fails to obtain. All of this is in some sense entirely fitting, for is not such a perfectly circular network of twofold exchange ultimately recuperable for an overarching restricted economy? By being the dysfunctional node of a still larger system, the point at which it does not *work,* Klossowski-Bataille paradoxically enable it still to be thinkable on general terms. They maintain this network of laudatory exchanges, not as a perfect circle, but indeed as a vicious one.

7 *Conclusion*

Intellectual Hospitality

I would like to conclude by considering the mode of thought exchange between Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski as a form of intellectual hospitality. But why put this convergence of twentieth-century French thinkers under the rubric of hospitality, which some might view as a rather outmoded term that conjures up a vision of guidebooks for high-society manners? Hospitality is an important construct in that it is both a formulation of rules *and* something that shatters all norms of appropriate behavior. In other words, it incarnates the nondialectical joining together of opposites (the Deleuzian disjunctive synthesis) that has been at issue in so many of the exchanges in this study. Hospitality, then, works on two levels at once. The first level pertains to laws and rules and the laying out of appropriate behavioral guidelines in a given context. The second level shakes up everything the first level has constructed by transforming all the rules so that the distinctions they minutely govern implode to such a degree that everything looks the same.

Once again, Klossowski provides the theoretical framework for such an application of hospitality to the intellectual dynamic in question. In his trilogy *Les Lois de l'hospitalité,* different characters incarnate different forms of hospitality. In chapter five, we saw how

Roberte serves as a medium of hospitality for the master of the house and any stranger or guest that may arrive. In the final book of the trilogy, *Le Souffleur,* Théodore, a slightly altered version of Octave from the first two books, speaks with the psychiatrist, Doctor Ygdrasil. (It should be noted that Ygdrasil bears a striking resemblance to Klossowski's good friend Jacques Lacan.)[1] In this conversation, Ygdrasil lays out one of the primary laws of hospitality, that it entails a relationship of *reciprocity*: "The practice of hospitality as you conceive it could not be unilateral. As with all hospitality, this practice, and particularly this practice, necessitates absolute reciprocity in order to be viable."[2] This law of hospitality, that hospitality must be reciprocal, is in some sense the implicit law of all the exchanges I have considered here (Bataille-Blanchot, Blanchot-Foucault, Foucault-Deleuze, Deleuze-Klossowski, and Klossowski-Bataille). The necessary condition for this framing of laudatory intellectual exchange is that of reciprocity. Each of the interlocutors shows hospitality to his fellow interlocutor in that he takes up the other's thought seriously and *as if it were his own,* thereby instituting a relationship of reciprocity.

Yet to return to Doctor Ygdrasil's formulation, "hospitality . . . necessitates absolute reciprocity." Does the reciprocity of these five intellectual exchanges fall into the category of *absolute* reciprocity? As we have seen, every exchange is marked by imbalance—often extreme imbalance—in that one thinker often writes more than the other, is more laudatory, or is the only one of the two still alive. The individual histories, the third parties they cathect upon, the given topics and modalities of exchange—all these show considerable and nonreciprocal variation. In this sense, the exchanges in question are anything but absolutely reciprocal. However, on the level of form, absolute reciprocity might be defined in a somewhat different fashion, and it is this alternate definition that ushers in the second component of hospitality, that of *breaking laws, losing distinctions, and becoming one.* Here, absolute reciprocity would entail a willingness to engage in a different form of encounter, one where the very identity of the interlocutor is at stake. It would entail a willingness to give up one's grounding as a person into a movement of thought that is ground-

less. The oxymoronic quality of "absolute reciprocity" is hereby displayed in its fullest sense. At its most absolute, the very term *reciprocity* is no longer usefully descriptive. *Absolute reciprocity* is the point at which the very standard of reciprocity ceases to function. It is this crucial—and often barely discernible—difference that to my mind distinguishes a rhetoric of hospitality from a rhetoric of the gift.

It would be quite plausible and even interesting to place this whole study under the sign of the gift. One might think of these laudatory essays as an elaborate system of immaterial gift exchange where, often through a third party or some form of temporal displacement, an initial gift of thought is returned with interest. To be sure, there are great affinities between the earlier generation of thinkers in this study—Blanchot, Klossowski, and above all Bataille[3]—and the French anthropologists Marcel Mauss and Claude Lévi-Strauss, the latter of whom brought the domains of anthropology, linguistics, and structuralism into unique convergence precisely around Mauss's notion of the gift. With the aim of situating the genre of the laudatory philosophical essay as a form of intellectual hospitality rather than one of gift exchange, I will delineate some of the intricate differences between the notions of gift and of hospitality.

The very thinking of the gift in twentieth-century France has much in common with the genre of writing that is at issue here, insofar as it is by way of commentary on Marcel Mauss's famous *Essai sur le don* [The Gift] (1923–24) that Lévi-Strauss's equally monumental introduction to Mauss's collected works makes its appearance. Yet Lévi-Strauss's essay is neither laudatory to the point of becoming one with the other's thought (as in the first four sets of exchanges discussed above) nor minutely critical and tit for tat in the fashion of the exchanges between Bataille and Klossowski, as we saw in the preceding chapter. Rather, Lévi-Strauss likens Mauss to a revered Old Testament figure—none other than Moses—but does so with a critical twist not found in the more reverently exegetical mode of writing in the first four exchanges. Lévi-Strauss begins chapter three of his introduction by lamenting Mauss's critical failure to see that the notion

of exchange as a whole (rather than a breakdown of exchange's component parts) is what is at stake in analyzing the gift economy:

> Why did Mauss halt at the edge of those immense possibilities, like Moses conducting his people all the way to a promised land whose splendor he would never behold? I am impelled to seek the reason, not from any wish to criticise, but out of a duty not to let the most fruitful aspect of his thinking be lost or vitiated. Mauss might have been expected to produce the twentieth-century social sciences' *Novum Organum;* he held all the guidelines for it, but it has only come to be revealed in fragmented form. An omission must no doubt explain this. There must be some crucial move, somewhere, that Mauss missed out.[4]

In this passage, Lévi-Strauss addresses Mauss's study of the gift as if it were a holy text—comparing Mauss to Moses and Mauss's masterpiece, the *Essai sur le don,* to Bacon's *Novum Organum*—and evokes it in a vocabulary of revelation ("it has only come to be revealed in fragmented form" ["ne s'est jamais révélé que sous forme de fragments"]). Yet this rhetoric of encomium, embellished as if to address a sacred text, is employed to underscore Mauss's cardinal omission: he has somehow failed to consider exchange in its totality, but has instead broken it down into a cycle of giving, receiving, and repaying (often with significant temporal displacement). It is not that Lévi-Strauss takes issue with Mauss's stunning array of examples drawn from Melanesian, Polynesian, North American Indian, and ancient Indo-European cultures that illustrate a common practice of rigorously coded rituals of often excessive gift-giving between families, tribes, or groups, each gift exacting at some later point a reciprocation in kind or even beyond.[5] Lévi-Strauss himself delineates similar forms of gift exchange—especially involving the "gift" of women in marriage[6]—in *The Elementary Structures of Kinship.* He notes that reciprocation of gifts in various cultures goes beyond purely economic motives, using the extreme example of the potlatch to illustrate this: "The best proof of the supra-economic nature of these exchanges is that in the *potlatch* there is no hesitation in sometimes

destroying considerable wealth by breaking a 'copper' or throwing it into the sea, and that greater prestige results from the destruction of wealth than from its distribution, because however liberal it may be destruction always requires a similar return."[7] Lévi-Strauss's description of gift exchange and potlatch are not fundamentally different from Mauss's; there is considerable convergence in terms of the *content* of their writings. However, what Lévi-Strauss expects of Mauss and does not receive to his satisfaction is a *formal* analysis of the gift economy at issue. Lévi-Strauss insists on viewing the gift economy through the lens of synthesis and convergence rather than through Mauss's model of breaking gift exchange into its component parts:

> Exchange is not a complex edifice built on the obligations of giving, receiving, and returning, with the help of some emotional-mystical cement. It is a synthesis immediately given to, and given by, symbolic thought, which, in exchange as in any other form of communication, surmounts the contradiction inherent in it; that is the contradiction of perceiving things as elements of dialogue, in respect of self and others simultaneously, and destined by nature to pass from one to the other. The fact that those things may be *the one's* or *the other's* represents a situation which is derivative from the initial relational aspect.[8]

Lévi-Strauss's emphasis here on viewing what would seem to be oppositional or contradictory as in fact part of a single entity is not far removed from the approach I have advocated in considering the exchanges between Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski. Yet Lévi-Strauss resists such a move toward singularity precisely in the act of highlighting Mauss's omission—his failure to consider exchange as the singular thing itself—and implicitly demanding of Mauss a reciprocity of thought. In failing to attain the singularity of synthesis, Mauss, like Moses, remains on the far side of the promised land, a land to which Lévi-Strauss himself presumably has access. It is in this divide, this failure of a reciprocity exacted, that Lévi-Strauss and Mauss ultimately partake more of the tit-for-tat dynamic of Klossowski and Bataille—while interestingly enough, Klossowski and Bataille foreground an imbalanced or nonreciprocal

economy, Lévi-Strauss and Mauss scrutinize a system that is ultimately balanced and based on reciprocity.

Such an equation of gift economy with reciprocity has been challenged, to be sure, by thinkers such as Pierre Bourdieu and Jacques Derrida. In *The Logic of Practice,* Bourdieu puts forward an important distinction between the "objective" truth of reciprocity that is discernible to the outside observer and the "subjective" reality of nonreciprocity that is more likely to be felt on the part of the actual participant in the gift exchange:

> To be truly objective, an analysis of exchange of gifts, words, or challenges must allow for the fact that, far from unfolding mechanically, the series of acts which, apprehended from outside and after the event, appears as a cycle of reciprocity, presupposes a continuous creation and may be interrupted at any state; and that each of the inaugural acts that sets it up is always liable to fall flat and so, for lack of a response, to be stripped retrospectively of its intentional meaning (the subjective truth of the gift can, as has been seen, only be realized in the counter-gift which consecrates it as such). Thus, even if reciprocity is the "objective" truth of the discrete acts that ordinary experience knows in discrete form and associates with the idea of a gift, it is perhaps not the whole truth of a practice that could not exist if its subjective truth coincided perfectly with its "objective" truth.[9]

Here Bourdieu underscores the fact that the perception of the observed is not necessarily any less relevant than that of the observer and may in fact be more attentive to exceptions and alternate realities in the overall system. As the narrator of Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* so acutely observes after realizing belatedly that his wife had been deceiving him for years: "And yet I swear by the sacred name of my creator that it was true. It was true sunshine; the true music; the true plash of the fountains from the mouth of stone dolphins. . . . If for nine years I have possessed a goodly apple that is rotten at the core and discover its rottenness only in nine years and six months less four days, isn't it true to say that for nine years I possessed a goodly apple?"[10]

To extrapolate this observation onto the series of laudatory essays at issue here, it is important to give voice to the imbalance and nonreciprocity articulated by various of the interlocutors with respect to the others (as when Deleuze writes of Foucault that "I needed him far more than he needed me"). It is in some sense easy for an outside observer to come along and note that such a fine-tuned system of laudatory exchange serves the happy goal of reciprocal self-promotion. As opposed to a nicely worked out system of reciprocal communication (which is, to be sure, observable), it is both more unsettling and more significant to take note of that which is not reciprocated, that which does not work, that which does not communicate properly.

It is toward this incommunicable aspect of the gift—which is an even more prominent feature of the notion of hospitality—that I would like, finally, to turn. Although, with the exception of chapter three, this study has been largely silent with regard to the work of Derrida,[11] it is Derrida's notions of both gift and hospitality that come closest to capturing the dynamics of exchange at stake in these literary-philosophical encounters.

Considering first the question of the gift, Derrida poses a formidable question to Mauss's *Essai sur le don,* namely, what is left of the actual gift when the gift is given and then annulled in a relation of reciprocal exchange?: "One could go so far as to say that a work as monumental as Marcel Mauss's *The Gift* speaks of everything but the gift. It deals with economy, exchange, contract . . . , it speaks of raising the stakes, sacrifice, gift *and* countergift—the gift *and* the annulment of the gift. All the gift supplements (potlatch, transgressions and excesses, surplus values, the necessity to give or give back more, returns with interest—in short, the whole sacrificial bidding war) are destined to bring about once again the circle in which they are annulled."[12] Derrida then goes on to ask what the gift would actually look like if it were not taken as that which is to be immediately or eventually canceled out: "But, after all, what would be a gift that fulfills the condition of the gift, namely, that it not appear as gift, that it not be, exist, signify, want-to-say as gift? A gift without wanting,

without wanting-to-say, an insignificant gift, a gift without intention to give? Why would we still call that a gift?"[13] In posing the question thus, Derrida implies that there might really be a thing called gift that is, in its essence, nonreciprocal and absolute (tantamount to what was introduced above as "absolute reciprocity").

While it seems that such a thing as a gift does exist and is indeed fundamental to the genre of writing under consideration here, Derrida's final question is nonetheless of utmost relevance: "Why would we still call that a gift?" Although Derrida himself recuperates this nonreciprocal notion of gift in a number of his works from the 1990s,[14] it seems that the labor of reformulation necessary to introduce nonreciprocity into the structures of reciprocal gift exchange so powerfully articulated by Mauss and Lévi-Strauss is a semantic and ideological battle better addressed by employing a different term altogether. And this is where *hospitality* makes its grand entrance, as a formulation that better highlights the possibilities of nonreciprocity embedded in the gift.

Whereas the gift economy is based on distinction and exchange between known entities, the relationship of hospitality is more firmly predicated on the *in*distinguishability between guest and host and the possibility of encountering an unknown entity. Conflation between host and guest as a central feature of hospitality is preeminently figured by the French word *hôte,* which means both "host" and "guest." A brief look at two works of fiction illustrates the way hospitality functions simultaneously as law and as point of breakdown between guest and host. Both stories are set in North Africa,[15] against the background of the desert.

In Albert Camus's short story "L'Hôte," set in Algeria in the mid-1950s, a *pied-noir* schoolteacher, Daru, finds himself with an unexpected Arab guest, a prisoner en route to another prison whom the local gendarme has forcibly entrusted to Daru to shelter overnight. In the course of the prisoner's brief stay, Daru slowly removes all restrictions on the Arab prisoner, so that it is no longer clear who is keeping whom captive, who is the guest and who the host. Moishe Black

examines the specific forms of ritual hospitality common in the desert and describes the way in which, in relation to the desert, both Daru and the Arab prisoner abide by the same laws and are not properly distinct. He writes that "the true 'ambiguity' of the title 'L'Hôte' is not that it might mean now the guest and now the host, but that host and guest are 'one flesh.' "[16] While the gendarme, Balducci, serves to enforce French colonial law, appealing to it in the very act of requiring Daru to shelter the prisoner overnight and conduct him to his destination the next day, Daru in actuality applies a different law of hospitality, a desert hospitality according to which a stranger is to be sheltered and fed without question and sent on his way with provisions for the journey. Furthermore, as a *pied-noir*—a French colonial settler in North Africa—observing the rituals of hospitality practiced by the desert nomads, Daru at once defies the colonial system that it is his job to perpetuate and shows respect toward a land in which he is both impostor and guest. By acting as host to the prisoner, Daru simultaneously insists on his position as guest in the prisoner's land. The structural contradiction of at once inhabiting the positions of host and guest goes to the very heart of a notion of hospitality that draws on laws and distinctions in order to break down the clear distinction between self and other.

A second literary example brings out the inherently impersonal nature of this form of hospitality. Edmond Jabès's *Le Livre de l'hospitalité* [The book of hospitality], a series of poetic meditations on the theme of hospitality, provides another version of desert, or nomad, hospitality. In what is strikingly the most narrative moment of a work that, like all Jabès's work, defies narrative, a story is told of two travelers in the Egyptian desert who have car failure and are lost in the sweltering desert for over thirty-six hours. At midnight a phantom appears, a Bedouin who leads them to shelter and safety. While doing so, he says to them, "*Are you not my guests?*"[17] The travelers return in an army vehicle two days later to thank the Bedouin man by bringing him much-needed supplies. The man, however, treats the two travelers as if they were strangers, and in this fashion indicates

that his long-established ritual of desert hospitality is purely impersonal and is offered, not to individuals as such, but as a *form* of upholding the laws of his tribe.[18] Here, to respect the law of hospitality is to insist on the absolute impersonality of the guest, to insist that it is the *form* of the law and not the *identity* of the person that matters.

Such an insistence on *not knowing* the stranger is diametrically opposite to a scenario involving an Australian aboriginal group that Lévi-Strauss cites from the work of Radcliffe-Brown:

> When a stranger comes to a camp that he has never visited before, he does not enter the camp, but remains at some distance. A few of the older men, after a while, approach him, and the first thing they proceed to do is to find out who the stranger is. The commonest question that is put to him is "Who is your *maeli* (father's father)?" The discussion proceeds on genealogical lines until all parties are satisfied of the exact relation of the stranger to each of the natives present in the camp, and the different men and women are pointed out to him and their relation to him defined.[19]

In this example, which serves to illustrate a logic of reciprocity, the stranger's identity must be established (here, along genealogical lines) to such a degree that he is no longer, effectively, a stranger but rather someone who can be known and positioned. Jabès's stranger—the one who both receives and gives hospitality—is by definition both unknown and unknowable.

Both Tahar Ben Jelloun in *Hospitalité française* and Derrida in the short book *De l'hospitalité* discuss a hospitality of laws and nations, and in particular France and its "hospitality" to foreigners, be they Arab or Jew or other. Both thinkers criticize a so-called hospitality that exacts from the stranger or foreigner not only a declaration of name and identity but also an abandonment of the stranger's proper culture.[20] By contrast, Derrida proposes an "unconditional" form of hospitality that does not exact reciprocity: "In other words, absolute hospitality demands that I open my 'at home' and that I not only give to the stranger (devoid of a last name, of a social status as stranger, etc.) but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I *give*

him place, that I let him come, that I let him arrive, and take place in the place that I offer to him, without asking him either for reciprocity (entering into a pact) or for his name. The law of absolute hospitality commands a break with the hospitality of rights, with law or justice as a right."[21] This form of absolute hospitality gives place to the stranger as such, without asking that stranger to produce markers or allegiances that will ally him or her with an identity. Rather, the host allows the stranger as guest to so transform the host that soon there is no longer a proper distinction between host and guest.

Such a letting go to the transformative power of a stranger is superbly illustrated by Pier Paolo Pasolini's film *Teorema,* the description and analysis of which Pasolini also published as a book. In this story, which Pasolini refers to as a "parable," a guest appears in the midst of an upper-class Milanese family and entirely transforms the very being of each family member.[22] This guest, played in the film by Terrence Stamp, has both sexual and intellectual encounters with each member of the household. After the encounter, each person enters into an altered state: the daughter goes into a trance, the son takes up painting with a fanatic vengeance, the mother begins to engage in chance sexual encounters with various young men, the maid returns to her familial home where she stands in the same place for days and then begins to levitate, and the father reexamines his business concerns. In the midst of the most bourgeois of settings, a force of divine proportions intervenes in the form of the guest and brings everything and everybody into its order.

So too does an overpowering force or energy of thought take over the persons of Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski, so that they are no longer just those distinct individuals but also collapsed into a single group identity. Although a number of these thinkers were actually close friends, their mode of engagement remains, above and beyond all, one that is eminently impersonal insofar as the person in question is not coterminous with the thought he engenders. Like Jabès's Bedouin, these thinkers obey impersonal rules of hospitality—hospitality to the other as a form of thought and not as a person. This configuration of thinkers, then, represents a new

form of intellectual hospitality, a mode of being in common that is not a form of correcting or out-mastering the other, but rather a way of joining with the other in language or in thought so that what is created is a community of thought that knows no bounds, a hospitality that liquidates identity, a communism of the soul.

Notes

One Introduction

1. It is telling, I think, that the most common response to a brief description of this project is laughter. I have come to realize that when the project encounters someone who does not laugh, it has found a friend.

2. Denis Hollier, *The College of Sociology, 1937–1939,* trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), xxi.

3. Ibid., xxi–xxii.

4. Ibid., xxi.

5. Pierre Klossowski, "Entre Marx et Fourier," *Le Monde,* 31 May 1969, reprinted and trans. in Hollier, *College of Sociology,* 389.

6. For more on this, see Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community,* trans. Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), and *Community at Loose Ends,* ed. Miami Theory Collective (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

7. To relate this back to the College of Sociology, Hollier mentions the connection to the "absence of work" in one fragmentary moment of his introduction, where he writes that "one aspect of the College is that of the unknown masterwork. The masterwork as absence of work. A masterwork of nonrecognition" (Hollier, xxiii).

8. Georges Canguilhem, *The Normal and the Pathological,* trans. Carolyn R. Fawcett in collaboration with Robert S. Cohen (New York: Zone Books, 1989), 239.

9. Ibid., 287.

10. Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle,* trans. Daniel W. Smith (London: Athlone Press and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 30. Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1969), 56.

11. This study is very much in the spirit, albeit with a more covertly

feminist and queer lens, of Kathryn Bond Stockton's *God Between Their Lips: Desire Between Women in Irigaray, Brontë, and Eliot* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994). Here, Stockton examines exchanges between women, which frequently take an epistolary form, and how they are both materialized and eroticized by an invocation of God. In the same way, the exchanges between these five French thinkers are materialized and eroticized by an invocation of a depersonalized outside, a realm that is not far removed from certain strains of Catholic mysticism. (And it is no coincidence, I think, that both Bataille and Klossowski were steeped in Catholic theology, even to the point of preparing to enter monastic orders.) Indeed, the original introduction to this project sought to place this masculine laudatory dynamic in a lineage of Catholic mystical writings, beginning with various medieval women mystics.

For a special journal issue devoted to women's friendship, see *Women in French Studies* 7 (1999).

12. I am indebted to Fredric Jameson for pointing out to me that this project is effectively a genre study.

13. Jacques Derrida, "The Law of Genre," in *On Narrative,* ed. W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 58. Published in French as "La Loi du genre," in *Parages* (Paris: Galilée, 1986), Derrida's collection of essays on Blanchot.

14. Raymond Aron, *Les Modernes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), 34.

15. Ibid., 35.

16. For more on Orpheus and Eurydice, see Blanchot's *The Space of Literature,* trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).

17. Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 553.

18. Cited in Jay, *Downcast Eyes,* 553–54.

19. Gilles Deleuze, "Le Désir et le pouvoir," *Magazine littéraire* 325 (October 1994): 57–65.

20. This is paraphrased from Vincent Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy,* trans. L. Scott-Fox and J. M. Harding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 183.

21. See Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense,* trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

22. Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy,* 183.

23. Allan Stoekl, "Foucault and the Intellectual Subject," in *Agonies of the Intellectual: Commitment, Subjectivity and the Performative in the Twentieth-Century French Tradition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 174–98. For another consideration of Bataille's influence on Foucault, see Martin Jay, "Limites de l'experience-limite: Bataille et Foucault," in *George Bataille après tout,* ed. Denis Hollier (Paris: Editions Belin, 1995), 39–59.

24. This is a formulation used by Jean-François Sirinelli in "The Concept of an Intellectual Generation," in *Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century France: Mandarins and Samurais,* ed. Jeremy Jennings (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 82–93.

25. Scott Durham, *Phantom Communities: The Simulacrum and the Limits of Postmodernism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 188.

Two Chattering Silences

1. Jacques Derrida, *Politiques de l'amitié* (Paris: Galilée, 1994), 326. In discussing the importance of the friendship between Bataille and Blanchot, Derrida attributes this statement to an anonymous other: "Un autre dirait: de l'amitié de cette légendaire paire d'amis de ce siècle." In English as *Politics of Friendship,* trans. George Collins (London: Verso, 1997), 293. Since *Politiques de l'amitié* was translated into English after the writing of this essay, the translations are mine, but I have included page references to the official translation in brackets.

2. See, for example, Georges Bataille, *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927–1939,* trans. Allan Stoekl (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985); *Eroticism: Death and Sensuality,* trans. Mary Dalwood (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1986); *Inner Experience,* trans. Leslie Anne Boldt (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988); and Maurice Blanchot, *The Infinite Conversation,* trans. Susan Hanson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); *The Writing of Disaster,* trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986); "Michel Foucault as I Imagine Him," trans. Jeffrey Mehlman in *Foucault/Blanchot* (New York: Zone Books, 1987).

3. See Joseph Libertson, "Proximity and the Word: Blanchot and Bataille," *Sub-Stance* 14 (1976): 35–49. Here, Libertson remarks on Bataille's central positioning in another of Blanchot's texts, *L'Entretien infini:* "Two brilliant meditations on Bataille, 'L'Affirmation et la passion

de la pensée negative' and 'Le Jeu de la pensée' are strategically placed at the center of Blanchot's book. The central division of the work, as well as its own central section, bear the original title of the first of these essays: 'L'Experience-Limite' " (35).

4. Maurice Blanchot, "La Parole vaine," in *L'Amitié* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), 137. [*Friendship,* trans. Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 117.] ["Je ne ferai pas ici 'oeuvre de critique.' J'aurais même renoncé, par un mouvement sur lequel je n'ai pas à m'expliquer, à toute parole qui puisse paraître de commentaire, si je ne me rappelais quelques mots qui me furent dits, peu de temps avant sa mort, par Georges Bataille sur *Le Bavard:* ce récit lui paraissait l'un des plus bouleversants qui aient été écrits; il le sentait proche de soi, comme est proche une vérité qui glisse et vous entraîne dans le glissement; ce fut peut-être l'une de ses dernières lectures; mais comme lui-même n'avait presque plus le désir d'écrire, il me demanda, sachant combien ce récit me touchait, moi aussi, s'il ne m'arriverait pas un jour d'en parler. Je gardai le silence. Ce silence qui nous est commun aujourd'hui, mais dont je suis seul à me souvenir, je dois essayer d'y répondre en donnant comme une suite à cet entretien."] *L'Amitié* was translated into English after the writing of this essay. The translations here are mine, but I include page references to the official translation in brackets.

5. For a reading of unequal exchange and its relation to dialectic in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit,* see Slavoj Žižek, "The Nonequivalent Exchange" in the section "Cogito: The Void Called Subject," in *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel and the Critique of Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 22–27.

6. In addition to the present chapter, see chapter 3 on Blanchot and Foucault and chapter 4 on Foucault and Deleuze for more on conversations that continue up to and after the death of one of the participants.

7. The question of pure and impure silences will be explored in depth in chapter 5 on Deleuze and Klossowski.

8. Louis-René des Forêts, *La Chambre des enfants* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960). See also *Les Mégères de la mer* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1967); *Le Malheur au Lido* (Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1987) (for Pierre Klossowski); *Poèmes de Samuel Wood* (Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1988); *Face à l'immémorable* (Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1993); and *Ostinato* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1997). For book-length commentaries on des Forêts, see the collection *Le Temps qu'il fait: Cahier Louis-René des Forêts,* no. 6–7 (Cognac: Le Temps qu'il fait, 1991), which includes short pieces by Roger

Laporte, Yves Bonnefoy, Pierre Klossowski, and Maurice Blanchot as well as a laudatory piece by des Forêts on Bataille ("Sur Georges Bataille," 20–30); and the excellent monograph by Jean Roudaut, *Louis-René des Forêts* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1995). See also Ora Avni, "Silence, vérité et lecture dans l'oeuvre de Louis-René des Forêts," *Modern Language Notes* 103, no. 4 (1987): 877–97. Des Forêts remains untranslated in English. For an English commentary, see Elena Russo, "Language Without Objects, Language Without Subjects: *Le Bavard,*" in *Skeptical Selves: Empiricism and Modernity in the French Novel* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 112–63.

Since the writing of this chapter, an exceptional article has appeared that locates a "critical turn" in Blanchot's writing traced to "La Parole vaine." See Dominique Rabaté, "The Critical Turn: Blanchot Reads des Forêts," *Yale French Studies* 93 (1998): 69–80. Rabaté characterizes the genre of Blanchot's writing in terms similar to the ones outlined in this study. Of "La Parole vaine" he writes: "This is not even a 'commentary,' but a careful effort to preserve an unsayable and singular relation to the text read. Even the enunciatory 'we,' so frequent in Blanchot's analyses, acquires a new value, that of a more perceptible weight, because it becomes common to both Blanchot and to Bataille. It seems to me that, starting from the beginning of the sixties, Blanchot's studies thus take on a more overtly personal accent, even if certainly it is a matter of personal relation to the impersonal—an accent that perhaps gives its specific tonality to the collection *L'amitié,* where Blanchot evokes Paulhan and Camus, his dead friends" (72). The question of a personal relation to the impersonal will be taken up in the next two chapters.

9. In "Language Without Objects, Language Without Subjects," Russo notes that "*Le Bavard* is a novel about the form of the novel: rather than following a narrative logic, it unravels according to the trajectory of an idea" (154). In the same essay, Russo not only elides the differences between Sartre and Blanchot, but she attributes to each an uncritically representational notion of language: "For Sartre, truth lies in the correspondence between the atomistic elements of language and the elements of reality in a perfectly mimetic relationship—this is just another version of linguistic Aristotelianism. For Blanchot, that notion of mimetic correspondence undergoes a simple reversal in the logic of the simulacrum, a reversal that does not alter the basic dualistic structure of the relationship between the sign and the object" (136). Despite an otherwise fascinating reading of *Le Bavard* and des Forêts's short story "Une

Mémoire démentielle," such an assessment of Sartre seems to me reductive, and such an assessment of Blanchot quite misguided.

10. ["Mes amis disent que je suis le silence même."] Louis-René des Forêts, *Le Bavard* (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), 13. Page references hereafter in the text are to this edition.

11. ["Bref, j'avais envie de parler et je n'avais absolument rien à dire."]

12. ["qui consiste en premier lieu à tenir l'interlocuteur en haleine, puis, par le simulacre d'un tic assez déplorable, à l'égarer avec ce qui aurait pu être, ce qui a peut-être été, ce qui n'a sûrement pas été, ce qu'il aurait été bon qu'il fût et ce qu'il aurait été fâcheux qu'il ne fût pas et ce qu'on a negligé de dire et ce qu'on a dit qui n'a pas été et ainsi de suite jusqu'à ce qu'enfin à bout de patience s'écriant: 'Au fait, au fait!' on vous assure, par ce furieux rappel à l'ordre, que vous n'avez pas tout à fait perdu votre temps."]

13. ["Si fâcheuse et si invraisemblable que puisse être à certains égards cette constatation, j'ai complètement oublié quels furent mes aveux pour la bonne raison que pendant que je les prononçais, je n'y prêtais aucune attention. Je m'explique. L'essentiel pour moi, c'était de bavarder, peu m'importait de quelle nature était mon bavardage."]

14. It might be qualified that, in these laudatory exchanges, the form and the content actually do come together. Indeed, the story of the *bavard* is at once the "content" of Blanchot's writing about Bataille *and* this writing's "form," insofar as Blanchot's encomium to Bataille might be characterized as itself a type of intellectual chatter.

15. ["Ma revanche consistera à laisser (le public déçu) toujours ignorer si je mentais encore quand je prétendais mentir."]

16. In a section on Foucault in *The Infinite Conversation,* Blanchot writes of "the empty depths of worklessness, where nothing is ever made of being" (200). In a footnote to this section, he remarks that "it seems to me that in the narrative Louis-René des Forêts entitled *Le Bavard,* which is in every way staggering, the same situation [of *désoeuvrement*] is set forth" (453, n. 3). ["la profondeur vide du *désoeuvrement,* là où de l'être il n'est jamais rien fait" and "il me semble que, dans le récit à tous égards bouleversant que Louis-René des Forêts a intitulé *Le Bavard,* c'est la même situation qui est déjà exposée" (*L'Entretien infini* [Paris: Gallimard, 1969], 297).]

17. ["Et si tout mon bavardage n'était que mensonge?"]

18. ["Lequel d'entre vous me jettera la pierre?"]

19. ["Ne craignez pas d'avoir perdu votre temps à prêter l'oreille à des

mensonges, puisque vous avez eu le privilège d'assister à une crise de bavardage, ce qui était certainement plus instructif que d'en lire un rapport, fût-il pur de toute intention littéraire."]

20. Peter Fenves, *"Chatter": Language and History in Kierkegaard* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 4. Such a conception of "chatter" coincides to some degree with Martin Heidegger's *Gerede,* or "idle talk." Heidegger writes that "the expression 'idle talk' is not to be used here in a 'disparaging' signification. Terminologically, it signifies a positive phenomenon which constitutes the kind of Being of everyday Dasein's understanding and interpreting" (*Being and Time,* trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson [San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1962], 211). Although Heidegger characterizes *Gerede* as a "positive phenomenon," he also locates it as a function of the "everyday" and of "average understanding" (213), which are not necessarily positive connotations in the Heideggerian lexicon. Whereas Fenves grants chatter an uncommon significance on the level of form, Heidegger's use of *Gerede* is much more ambivalent. Nonetheless, Heidegger also makes the point that the *form* of "idle talk" is more important than what is actually being said: "We do not so much understand the entities which are talked about; we already are listening only to what is said-in-the-talk as such. What is said-in-the-talk gets understood; but what the talk is about is understood only approximately and superficially" (212). In short, while there is considerable overlap between the way *Gerede* functions for Heidegger and "chatter" functions for Fenves on a formal level, the valence of these terms is distinctly different. For Heidegger, *Gerede* is subordinate to a less everyday form of *Dasein*; whereas for Fenves, "chatter" in and of itself approximates the sublime. For an analysis that brings these conceptions of *Gerede* and "chatter" together, see Alexander Gelley, "Melville's Talking Man: Rhetoric in *The Confidence Man,*" in *Rereading Texts / Rethinking Critical Presuppositions: Essays in Honour of H. M. Daleski,* ed. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, Leona Toker, and Shuli Barzilai (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996).

21. Ibid., 13. On a similar note, Fenves writes at a later point that " 'chatter' is pure language. . . . 'Chatter' even escapes the suspension of opposites, speech and silence, into a higher conceptual unity" (233). He continues that " 'chatter,' as a result, does not raise speech and silence into a speech that includes its own silence; such a speech would in fact correspond to 'indirect' communication, the communication of the incommunicable. 'Chatter' is not 'indirect' communication, yet it cannot

be distinguished from it by any means" (233). While the subtlety of such a distinction is tantalizing, it seems that there is nothing regrettable about "rais[ing] speech and silence into a speech that includes its own silence." Indeed, it is precisely such an elevation, and the alternative possibilities of communication it offers, that is one of the most estimable features of chatter.

In "Proximity and the Word," Joseph Libertson pursues this line of inquiry with respect to the *entretien* between Bataille and Blanchot and its relation to communication and subjectivity: "Always incapable of communication, and feeling the absence of communication as the very condition of its integrity, in the very moment of a closure which will silence communication forever, the self communicates" (43). In this sense, communication is not something to be dismissed, but rather to be analyzed in all its often contradictory complexity.

22. "La Parole vaine," 141 [121]. ["Son 'Je' est si poreux qu'il ne peut se retenir en soi, il fait silence de toutes parts, silence qui bavarde pour mieux se dissimuler ou mieux se tourner en dérision. Seulement, cette solitude a besoin de trouver à qui parler."]

23. This resonates with Foucault's claim that, starting from the eighteenth century, there is an excessive attention to speaking about sex at all costs under the guise of repressing it. Sex, then, is like the silence that is thought to be covered over but instead infiltrates everything. See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction,* trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1980).

24. "La Parole vaine," 145–46 [124–25]. ["Bavarder est la honte du langage. Bavarder, ce n'est pas parler. La parlerie détruit le silence tout en empêchant la parole. Quand on bavarde, on ne dit rien de vrai, même si l'on ne dit rien de faux, car l'on ne parle pas vraiment. Cette parole qui ne parle pas, parole de divertissement qui va de-ci de-là, par laquelle on passe d'un sujet à l'autre, sans qu'on sache de quoi il est question, parlant également de tout, des choses dites serieuses, des choses dites insignifiantes, dans un égal mouvement d'interêt, précisément parce qu'il est entendu qu'on ne parle de rien, une telle manière de dire, fuite devant le silence ou fuite devant la crainte de s'exprimer, est l'objet de notre constante réprobation. . . . La référence au sérieux, qui exige qu'on ne parle qu'à bon escient, en rapport avec la gravité, ou bien qu'on ne parle pas, mais qu'on commence seulement de parler, apparaît bientôt comme une tentative pour fermer le language; il s'agit d'arrêter les mots sous prétexte de les rendre à leur dignité; on impose silence parce que, seul, on

détient le droit de parler; on dénonce la parole vaine et on lui substitue la parole tranchante qui ne parle pas, mais *qui* commande."]

For a similar articulation in Blanchot, see "The Painfulness of Dialogue," where Blanchot writes that "dialogue can become, as with certain American writers, expressively insignificant. . . . When someone speaks, what emerges is his refusal to speak; his words are his silence," in *The Sirens' Song: Selected Essays of Maurice Blanchot,* trans. Sacha Rabinovitch (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 200. ["le 'dialogue,' sous l'influence de quelques écrivains américains, s'est fait d'une insignifiance expressive . . . quand quelqu'un parle, c'est son refus de parler qui devient alors sensible; son discours est son silence" ("La Douleur du dialogue," in *Le Livre à venir* [Paris: Gallimard, 1959], 209).]

25. I would claim that the effort to articulate such a space that is beyond and apart is one of the central preoccupations of twentieth-century French thought. In this sense, such categories as Lacan's "Real," Derrida's "différance," Deleuze's "event," Blanchot's and Foucault's "outside," Lyotard's "différend," and Nancy's "freedom" would have in common this gesture to a realm somehow outside or beyond a dialectical mode of critique.

26. Other sources date this encounter to 1940. See, for example, *Violent Silence: Celebrating Georges Bataille,* ed. Paul Buck (The Georges Bataille Event, 1984), 8. Studies that consider Bataille and Blanchot together include Jane Gallop, *Intersections: A Reading of Sade with Bataille, Blanchot, and Klossowski* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981); Roger Laporte, *A l'extrême pointe: Proust, Bataille, Blanchot* (Paris: P.O.L., 1998); Joseph Libertson, *Proximity: Levinas, Blanchot, Bataille, and Communication* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1982); Philippe Mesnard, *Maurice Blanchot: Le Sujet de l'engagement* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996); Steven Shaviro, *Passion and Excess: Blanchot, Bataille, and Literary Theory* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1990); and Allan Stoekl, *Politics, Writing, Mutilation: The Cases of Bataille, Blanchot, Roussel, Leiris, and Ponge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985). See especially "Friends/Corpses/Turds/Whores: Blanchot on Sade," in Gallop, *Intersections,* 35–66; "Experience in Bataille and Blanchot," in Libertson, *Proximity,* 253–59; "Entre Georges Bataille et Maurice Blanchot" and "L'Absence de l'amitié," in Mesnard, *Maurice Blanchot,* 70–83, 197–205; and "Impossible Encounters: Passion, Intimacy, and Affirmation in Blanchot" in Shaviro, *Passion and Excess,* 141–70.

27. Georges Bataille, *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970),

12:645 (note to p. 457). ["C'est en 1941 que, par l'intérmédiare de Pierre Prévost, Bataille rencontre Maurice Blanchot 'auquel le lient immédiatement l'admiration et l'accord.' De là date 'l'entretien infini' fondé sur leur amitié. Il semble que Bataille ait envisagé d'écrire deux ouvrages sur Maurice Blanchot sans pouvoir y donner suite."]

28. Georges Bataille, "Silence et littérature," *Critique* 57 (February 1952): 99. ["A vouloir comparer Maurice Blanchot à 'l'homme invisible' de Wells, il y a une part de plaisanterie déplacée. L'auteur dont il s'agit, tout d'abord, ne voulut jamais faire apparaître ce néant visible que le spectre de Wells révélait en défaisant les bandelettes dont il s'était enveloppé. C'est, sur un autre plan, le silence que révèlent les phrases que défont—ou développent, si l'on veut,—ses ouvrages romanesques. Je reconnaîtrai cependant qu'à cette différence près, l'image est exacte. Ces ouvrages ont un seul objet, le silence."]

29. Maurice Blanchot, *Death Sentence,* trans. Lydia Davis (Barrytown, N.Y.: Station Hill Press, 1978), 32–33. ["Mon unique point fort fut mon silence. Un aussi grand silence, quand j'y réfléchis, m'apparaît incroyable, non pas un mérite, car parler, d'aucune manière je n'en eus l'idée, mais justement que jamais le silence ne se soit dit à lui-même: prends garde, il y a là quelque chose dont tu me dois compte . . . . Avoir perdu le silence le regret que j'en éprouve est sans mesure. Je ne puis dire quel malheur envahit l'homme qui une fois a pris la parole" (*L'Arrêt de mort* [Paris: Gallimard, 1948], 56–57).]

30. Des Forêts's *bavard* draws out the contradictory tensions of silence in the following passage: "Silence—this silence for which he felt a mixture of terror and attachment which determined the only approach to a thing at once attractive and dangerous, marvelous and formidable, this silence whose arid laws he had never agreed to obey, had not ceased to hate, but to which he nevertheless remained bound by a bitter nostalgia, he found himself secretly calling it in his hopes, even if a trace of pride or of respectful fear still kept him from taking the first step (and it is with joyous relief that the other discerns signs of fatigue in his executioner, signs also of his own deliverance)" (212–13). ["Le silence—ce silence pour lequel il éprouve le mélange de terreur et d'attachement que détermine la seule approche d'une chose à la fois attirante et dangereuse, prestigieuse et dedoutée, ce silence aux lois arides duquel il n'a jamais consenti à se plier, qu'il n'a cessé de haïr, mais auxquelles il reste pourtant lié par une nostalgie cuisante, il se surprend à l'appeler secrètement de ses voeux, si même un reste d'orgueil ou de crainte respectueuse le retient

encore de faire le premier pas (et c'est avec un soulagement joyeux que l'autre distingue chez son bourreau les signes de la fatigue qui sont aussi ceux de sa propre délivrance).”]

31. Georges Bataille, “Ce monde où nous mourons,” *Critique* 123/124 (August-September 1957): 683–84 (special issue on Georges Bataille). [“Le jeu de la pensée demande une force, une rigeur telles qu'à côté la force et la rigeur que la construction demande donnent l'impression d'un relâchement. L'acrobate dans le vide est soumis à des règles plus précises que le maçon ne quittant pas le sol. Le maçon *produit,* mais à la limite de l'impossible l'acrobat aussitôt lâche ce qu'il a saisi. Il s'arrête. L'arrêt est la limite qu'il nierait, s'il en avait la force. L'arrêt veut dire que le souffle manque et la pensée qui répondrait à l'effort de la pensée serait celle que nous atteindrions si le souffle, à la fin, ne manquait pas.”]

32. The notion of the “pure breath” is central to Klossowski and will be taken up in chapter 5.

33. Maurice Blanchot, “Le Jeu de la pensée,” *Critique* 195/196 (August-September 1963): 734–41 (reprinted in *The Infinite Conversation,* 216). [“Et . . . ne l'oublions pas, ce jeu de la pensée ne peut se jouer seul, il y faut deux partenaires de jeu, il faut que la même décision, la même franchise, le même rapport à l'enjeu les engagent à jouer. Pour le préciser encore, on pourrait dire que la conversation qu'ils poursuivent, ce mouvement de se tourner ensemble vers l'infini de l'affirmation, est semblable au dialogue des joueurs de dés” (*L'Entretien infini* [Paris: Gallimard, 1969], 321).]

34. Blanchot goes on to describe the “non-personal intimacy” between gamblers: “I shall only say that the non-familiar intimacy of thought between two men speaking who are bound by the essential establishes a distance and a proximity beyond measure. As exists between two gamblers” (*The Infinite Conversation,* 217). [“Je dirai seulement, sous la même perspective, qu'entre deux hommes parlant, liés par l'essentiel, l'intimité non-familière de la pensée établit une distance et une proximité sans mesure. Comme entre deux joueurs peut-être” (322).]

35. Some of these themes are taken up in the work of Paul Auster, who is in many respects Blanchot's American counterpart. See especially *Ghosts* (Los Angeles: Sun & Moon Press, 1986) and *The Music of Chance* (New York: Viking, 1990). It is worth noting that Auster has translated Blanchot (*Vicious Circles* [Barrytown, N.Y.: Station Hill Press, 1985]) and that Auster's books in translation are omnipresent in France—much more so than in the United States.

36. The passage from Blanchot's *The Last Man,* trans. Lydia Davis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), concludes with the following sentence: "It was the look by which one would have most wanted to be regarded, but which perhaps never looked at you, never looked beyond a bit of emptiness beside you. One day, this emptiness was a young woman I was close to" (12, trans. modified). ["C'était le regard par lequel on eût le plus souhaité d'être regardé, mais qui ne vous regardait peut-être jamais, ne regardait encore qu'un peu de vide auprès de vous. Ce vide, un jour, fût une femme avec qui j'étais lié" (*Le Dernier Homme* [Paris: Gallimard, 1957], 25–26).]

37. Bataille, "Ce monde où nous mourons," 678. ["J'ai souligné les phrases sur lesquelles j'ai voulu attirer l'attention (les phrases antérieures demandent au lecteur, si elles doivent s'ouvrir à lui, de descendre plus avant dans la profondeur de ce livre—apparemment le plus profond de tous livres)."]

38. Ibid., 682. ["Quelques lignes encore, et la seconde partie, la partie finale, commence, où le récit atteint un cours sublime. Si j'emploie ce mot, ce n'est pas avec sa valeur d'éloge (à mes yeux, le petit livre de Maurice Blanchot se situe au delà, au dessus de tout éloge)."]

39. To situate this kind of affirmation in terms of limit experience, we might turn to Blanchot's other essay on the event of Bataille's death, originally titled "L'Expérience-limite" and reprinted in *The Infinite Conversation:* "Thus the limit experience is experience itself: thought thinking that which will not let itself be thought, thought thinking more than it is able by an affirmation that affirms more than can be affirmed!" (209) ["L'expérience-limite est ainsi l'expérience même: la pensée pense cela qui ne se laisse pas penser, la pensée pense plus qu'elle ne peut penser, dans une affirmation qui affirme plus que ce qui peut s'affirmer!" (310)].

40. "Ce monde où nous mourons," 684. ["*Le Dernier homme* révèle un monde auquel nous n'accédons qu'en un mouvement vertigineux. Mais ce livre est le mouvement, où perdant toute assise, nous avons, s'il se peut, la force de *tout* voir. Du *Dernier homme,* il est difficile de parler, tant ce livre échappe aux limites où la plupart voudraient rester."] For a discussion of Bataille and Blanchot focused on the idea of "the last man" and Hegel, see Gerald L. Bruns, *Maurice Blanchot: The Refusal of Philosophy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 130–44.

41. Maurice Blanchot, "L'Affirmation et la passion de la pensée négative," in *The Infinite Conversation,* 202. ["Ils disent l'essentiel et ils sont essentiels. Non seulement par leur beauté, leur éclat, leur force littéraire

à laquelle nulle autre ne se mesure, mais par leurs rapports avec la recherche dont ils témoignent" (300).] Blanchot goes on to single out Bataille's *L'Expérience intérieure* and *Madame Edwarda.* He writes of *L'Expérience intérieure* that "I would like to say again what, citing Nietzsche's judgment of Zarathustra, I wrote many years ago when the *Interior Experience* appeared, and that twenty years of thought, twenty years of recognition and friendship have rendered always more true for me: 'This work is entirely apart' " (211). ["Je voudrais en dire à nouveau ce qu'il y a bien des années, lorsque parut *L'Expérience intérieure,* j'en avais écrit en citant le jugement de Nietzsche sur Zarathoustra, et que vingt années de pensée, d'attention, de reconnaissance et d'amitié m'ont rendu toujours plus vrai: 'Cette oeuvre est tout à fait à part' " (313).] Blanchot also extols "the books Georges Bataille published under a name other than his own and whose force of truth is without comparison: I am thinking especially of *Madame Edwarda,* of which I have spoken in the past, calling it rather feebly 'the most beautiful narrative of our time' " (202). ["les livres qu'il publia sous un autre nom que le sien et dont la puissance de verité est incomparable: je pense d'abord à *Madame Edwarda* dont j'ai parlé jadis en l'appelant faiblement 'le plus beau récit de notre temps' " (300).]

42. This term is taken from Ann Smock, *Double Dealing* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985). For more on what Smock terms "the Blanchot experience" and its relation to play, see her introduction, "Not Yet: Preamble," 3–11.

43. Maurice Blanchot, "Le Jeu de la pensée," in *The Infinite Conversation,* 212. ["Dans la précaution dont, même parlant avec un ami fort ancien, Georges Bataille ne se jugeait pas quitte, il n'y avait pas de la prudence, ni même seulement le souci de l'interlocuteur, mais bien davantage: un appel silencieux à l'attention pour affronter le risque de la parole commune, l'entente aussi de cette réserve qui seule permet de tout dire et l'allusion enfin au mouvement vers l'inconnu dont deux hommes ensemble, liés par quelque chose d'essentiel, sont comme obligés de témoigner presque aussitôt" (315).]

44. Bataille, *Inner Experience,* 7. ["Je posai la question devant quelques amis, laissant voir une partie de mon désarroi: l'un d'eux énonça simplement ce principe, que l'expérience elle-même est l'autorité (mais que l'autorité s'expie)" (*L'Expérience intérieure* [Paris: Gallimard, 1954], 18).] For more on the question of authority, inner experience, and Bataille and Blanchot, see Laporte, *A l'extrême pointe,* 57–60.

45. Ibid. ["Maurice Blanchot. Plus loin je me rapporte à deux reprises à cette conversation."]

46. There are additional allusions to Blanchot in *L'Expérience intérieure.* In the first section, Bataille writes in a footnote that "the principle of contestation is one of those upon which Maurice Blanchot insists as on a foundation" (12). ["Le principe de contestation est l'un de ceux sur lesquels Maurice Blanchot insiste comme sur un fondement" (24).] Further on, Bataille quotes a long passage from Blanchot's *Thomas l'obscur* and juxtaposes it with another intriguing reference to their ongoing conversation: "In a way which is completely independent from this book—orally, yet in such a way that he in no respect lacked the feeling of discretion which demands that, close to him, I thirst for silence—I heard the author set out the foundation for all 'spiritual' life" (102). ["D'une façon toute indépendante de son livre, oralement, de sorte cependant qu'en rien il n'ait manqué au sentiment de discrétion qui veut qu'auprès de lui j'ai soif de silence, j'ai entendu l'auteur poser le fondement de toute vie 'spirituelle' " (130).]

47. Bataille, *Inner Experience,* 53; trans. modified. ["Conversation avec Blanchot. Je lui dis: l'expérience intérieure n'a ni but, ni autorité, qui la justifient. Si je fais sauter, éclater le souci d'un but, d'une autorité, du moins subsiste-t-il un vide. Blanchot me rappelle que but, autorité sont des exigences de la pensée discursive; j'insiste, décrivant l'expérience sous la forme donnée en dernier lieu, lui demandant comment il croit cela possible sans autorité ni rien. Il me dit que l'expérience elle-même est l'autorité. Il ajoute au sujet de cette autorité qu'elle doit être expiée" (72–73).]

48. This point-counterpoint mode of exchange will reappear in a more pervasive fashion in the exchanges between Bataille and Klossowski discussed in chapter 6, which mark an aberration in the overall network of laudatory exchange at issue here.

49. *Inner Experience,* 61. ["Blanchot me demandait: pourquoi ne pas poursuivre mon expérience intérieure comme si j'étais le *dernier homme?*" (83).]

50. "Le Jeu de la pensée," *The Infinite Conversation,* 214. ["La parole porte avec elle le caractère fortuit qui lie dans le jeu la pensée au hasard. . . . Une telle forme de dialogue est précisement ce à quoi conduit la parole engagée dans le jeu de la pensée, telle que Georges Bataille nous l'a rendue présente par un mouvement qui lui fut propre. Cette pensée qui se joue avec, comme enjeu, l'illimité de la pensée—l'atteinte d'une

affirmation infinie—ne s'accomplit pas sous la forme d'une invitation à questionner et à répondre, encore moins à affirmer, puis à contester. Elle exclut toute discussion, elle néglige toute controverse (ce travail par lequel deux hommes d'avis différents mettent en commun leurs différends, confrontant une thèse avec une autre en vue d'une conciliation dialectique)" (317–18).]

51. Ibid., 212. ["Le plus souvent, lorsque nous parlons ou, aussi bien, si nous entendons parler, nous ne manquons pas ensuite d'éprouver un sentiment de malaise, comme s'il y avait de la honte à user des mots, fût-ce pour en dire d'insignifiantes: dans le premier cas, parce que nous trahissons la parole elle-même en son sérieux. Je n'affirmerai pas que tout entretien avec Georges Bataille fût libre de ce sentiment, mais que la parole prenait alors en charge son propre malaise et, dès qu'il était ressenti, le revendiquait, le respectait, pour le restituer à un mouvement différent" (314).]

52. I take issue with readings of Bataille and Blanchot that assert the primacy of their preoccupation with negativity and death. Such is the case in John Gregg, "Literature and Transgression," in *Maurice Blanchot and the Literature of Transgression* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 10–17.

53. These traces of the personal are most visible in the collection of letters written by Blanchot to Bataille and housed in the collection of Bataille's manuscripts at the Bibliothèque Nationale (BN, Mss, N. a. fr. 15853/ 31, 224–315). Especially striking are the not infrequent references to missed encounters. Leslie Hill makes reference to some of these letters, especially in footnotes, in *Blanchot: Extreme Contemporary* (London: Routledge, 1997). This is also a compelling and very thorough study of the entirety of Blanchot's oeuvre as well as its relationship to certain biographical details. In this vein, a biography of Blanchot (a rather oxymoronic notion!) has also been published in French. See Christophe Bident, *Maurice Blanchot, partenaire invisible* (Seyssel: Editions Champ Vallon, 1998).

54. For more on Bataille's engagement with Leiris, see the collection of essays, *Bataille-Leiris: L'Intenable assentiment au monde,* ed. Francis Marmande (Dijon-Quetigny: Belin, 1999). Between Bataille and Blanchot, Blanchot is the thinker whose concepts and readings correspond most closely to the issues in question here. Bataille is much more a thinker of transgression than of silence, and he seems in many instances to be pursuing shock value in and of itself; however, this is never the case

with Blanchot. It seems that of Bataille's various concepts "sovereignty" is most readily applicable to an analysis of silence and chatter. For such an application, see Blanchot, *The Infinite Conversation,* 206 [*L'Entretien infini,* 306].

55. Like Leiris, Bataille is drawn to the proximity of virility and death as incarnated in the bullfighter. For a particularly vivid description of this, see Bataille's *Story of the Eye,* trans. Joachim Neugroschel (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1987), which was written in 1928.

56. "La Parole vaine," 138–39 [118]. ["Nous serions davantage tentés, cherchant quelque point d'appui, d'évoquer tel mouvement particulièrement cette page de *L'Age d'homme* où l'écrivain ne trouve d'autre raison à son penchant de se confesser que le refus de rien dire, montrant que la parole la plus irrépressible, celle qui ne connaît ni limite ni fin, a pour origine sa propre impossibilité."]

57. Maurice Blanchot, "Gazes from Beyond the Grave," in *The Work of Fire,* trans. Charlotte Mandell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 248. ["Il y a un péché de la confession, que nulle confession ne peut rattraper, puisqu'il se commet en s'avouant et s'aggrave dès qu'on absout: la faute est ici liée à l'innocence, et cependant vouloir cette innocence, cela est nécessaire, l'on ne peut plus s'en dispenser, en sorte que tout est faute et l'aveu et le refus de l'aveu. . . . Mais il faut encore observer que la complaisance est ici le contraire de la complaisance, que non seulement elle ne signifie pas un penchant excessif à parler mais a plutôt son origine dans le refus de ne rien dire, dans un 'Je ne puis parler' qui par ses excès finit par lui ouvrir la bouche" ("Regards d'outre-tombe," in *La Part du feu* [Paris: Gallimard, 1949], 241–42).]

58. Ibid., 250. ["Le ton 'objectif' de *L'Age d'homme,* la froideur vigilante, parfois presque compassée, qui s'y fait jour répondent au 'Je ne veux pas parler' souterain . . . de cette réticence foncière qui d'abord empêche puis rend folle toute communication" (243–44).]

Three "O My Friends, There Is No Friend"

1. Jacques Derrida, *Politiques de l'amitié* (Paris: Galilée, 1994), 326 [293].

2. Maurice Blanchot, *L'Amitié* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971); *Friendship,* trans. Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997). ["amis jusqu'à cet état d'amitié profonde où un homme abandonné, abandonné de tous ses amis, rencontre dans la vie celui qui l'accompagne

au-delà de la vie, lui-même sans vie, capable de l'amitié libre, détachée de tous liens."]

3. Derrida, *Politiques de l'amitié,* 96 [78]. ["Citations de citations, donc, au sujet de la possibilité de citer les grands amis, les vrais. Même s'ils sont plus de deux, le modèle (*exemplar*) sera le plus souvent fourni par un duel, par quelques grands couples d'amis. . . . Notre culture, notre école, notre littérature sont le théâtre de ces couples—et la postérité de ces grands amis."]

4. This is particularly the case when one or both of the parties is a woman. For a consideration of friendship between a woman and a man in Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* and Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron,* see Ullrich Langer, *Perfect Friends: Studies in Literature and Moral Philosophy from Boccaccio to Corneille* (Geneva: Droz, 1994), 115–43, 176–86.

5. Michel de Montaigne, "On Friendship," in *Essays,* trans. J. M. Cohen (London: Penguin Books, 1958), 94; trans. modified. ["En l'amitié, c'est une chaleur generale et universelle, temperée au demeurant et égale, une chaleur constante et rassize, toute douceur et polissure, qui n'a rien d'aspre et de poignant" ("De l'amitié" in *Oeuvres complètes,* ed. Albert Thibaudet and Maurice Rat [Paris: Pleiade, 1962], 184).] Alfred Glauser in *Montaigne paradoxal* (Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1972) attacks this passage, arguing that such an ideal of friendship belongs to the world of the Ancients, that it could never be actualized if La Boétie were really present, and that it is thus a false and imaginary friendship capable of such elevation only by its very absence (138). While this may well be true, along with Glauser's claims that "Montaigne creates for himself a rarified place where he praises sentiments that are, as it were, detached from people" (140) and "Montaigne speaks of communication, but he knows himself to be incommunicable, thus having little chance of making friendships" (141), such critiques of Montaigne's *person* and *movitations* are not, to my mind, necessarily contradictory or relevant to his rhetoric. Furthermore, what is necessarily so awful about being in a rarified place and not communicating? In the same fashion, it is true on some level that the laudatory exchanges between Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, Foucault, and Klossowski are preeminently self-interested, but this critique does not preclude the possibility that other more interesting or more impersonal dynamics might also be at work. It is precisely the impersonality of Montaigne's evocation of La Boétie (that Glauser so masterfully delimits), alongside a rhetoric of the absolutely personal, that brings their friend-

ship onto comparable grounds with the more modern friendships at issue here. (If the country in question were not France, where a typology of the modern and modernism does not readily apply, I would be tempted to label the friendships between these five thinkers as "high modernist.") Because of these similarities, it is all the more imperative to read Montaigne *literally,* because it is in such a literal reading that the striking differences between Montaigne and a thinker like Blanchot truly emerge. I am grateful to Tom Conley for bringing the wealth of Montaigne scholarship on friendship to my attention and am also indebted to his reading of Montaigne and La Boétie's friendship through the lens of political interest rather than self-interest. See Tom Conley, "Friendship in a Local Vein: Montaigne's Servitude to La Boétie," *SAQ* 97 (Winter 1998): 65–90.

6. Montaigne, "On Friendship," 99, trans. modified. ["Aymés le (disoit Chilon) comme ayant quelque jour à le haïr; haïssez le, comme ayant à l'aymer. Ce precepte qui est si abominable en cette souveraine et maistresse amitié, il est salubre en l'usage des amitiez ordinaires et coustumières, à l'endroit desquelles il faut employer le mot qu'Aristote avoit très-familier: O mes amis, il n'y a nul amy" (188–89).]

7. See Glauser, "Amitié d'essai," in *Montaigne paradoxal,* 133–42; François Rigolot, "Avatars de l'amitié: L'Essai et la lettre," in *Les Métamorphoses de Montaigne* (Paris: P.U.F., 1988), 61–78; Langer, "Montaigne's Friendship: Sublime Inaccessibility," in *Perfect Friendship,* 164–76; Richard L. Regosin, "Friendship and Literature," in *The Matter of My Book: Montaigne's* Essais *as the Book of the Self* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 7–29; Stephen Greenblatt, "Anti-Dictator: Montaigne Witnesses the Death of His Friend Etienne de la Boétie," in *A New History of French Literature,* ed. Denis Hollier (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 223–28.

8. Ibid., 97. ["Cette cy n'a point d'autre idée que d'elle mesme, et ne se peut rapporter qu'à soy" (187).]

9. Ibid., 92, trans. modified. ["cette amitié que nous avons nourrie, tant que Dieu a voulu, entre nous, si entière et si parfaite que certainement il ne s'en lit guiere de pareilles, et entre nos hommes, il ne s'en voit aucune trace en usage. Il faut tant de rencontres à la bastir, que c'est beaucoup si la fortune y arrive une fois en trois siecles" (182).]

10. Glauser, *Montaigne paradoxal,* 55.

11. Montaigne, "On Friendship," 99. ["Tout estant par effect commun entre eux, volontez, pensements, judgemens, biens, femmes, en-

fans, honneur et vie, et leur convenance n'estant qu'un'ame en deux corps selon la très-propre definition d'Aristote, ils ne se peuvent ny prester, ny donner rien" (189).]

12. For more on the relationship between a gift economy and absolute hospitality to the stranger or the friend, see chapter 7.

13. Montaigne, "On Friendship," 98. ["Je dis perdre, à la verité, ne nous reservant rien qui nous fut propre, ny qui fut sien, ou mien" (187).] Clearly at issue here is some form of homoerotic relation between men, but one that is mediated, not through a woman or a physical body, but rather through writing and thought. As Barry Weller notes, "La Boétie's writing had been the inaugural, the originary act of their friendship, in relation to which Montaigne could define himself solely in terms of his response" ("The Rhetoric of Friendship in Montaigne's *Essais,*" *New Literary History* 9 [Spring 1978]: 509). Such a form of friendship is in my opinion none other than a queer erotics of thought and writing. See also Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

14. And in this respect also at odds with a lineage of ancient philosophers who emphasize the harmoniousness and moral superiority of "perfect" friendship. For a more nuanced treatment of the philosophy of friendship in Aristotle, Cicero, and Seneca, and its relation to Montaigne, see Langer, "Commonplaces of Friendship" in *Perfect Friendship,* 14–29.

15. Maurice Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community,* trans. Pierre Joris (Barrytown, N.Y.: Station Hill Press, 1988), 22–23. ["Pour Bataille, l'amitié fait partie de 'l'opération souveraine'; ce n'est pas par légèreté que *Le coupable* porte en premier lieu ce sous-titre, *L'amitié;* l'amitié, il est vrai, se définit mal: amitié pour soi-même jusque dans la dissolution; amitié de l'un à l'autre, comme passage et comme affirmation d'une continuité à partir de la nécessaire discontinuité. Mais la lecture—le travail désoeuvré de l'oeuvre—n'en est pas absente, encore qu'elle appartienne parfois au vertige de l'ivresse: ' . . . J'avais déjà absorbé beaucoup de vin. Je demandais à X de lire dans le livre que je traînais avec moi un passage et il l'a lu à haute voix (personne à ma connaissance ne lit avec plus de dure simplicité, avec plus de grandeur passionnée que lui). J'étais trop ivre et ne me rappelle plus exactement le passage. Lui-même avait bu autant que moi. Ce serait une erreur de penser qu'une telle lecture faite par des hommes pris de boisson n'est qu'un paradoxe provocant . . . Je crois que nous sommes unis en ceci que nous sommes l'un et l'autre ouverts,

sans défense—par tentation—à des forces de destruction, mais non comme des audacieux, commes des enfants que n'abandonne jamais une lâche naïveté.' . . . La scène qui nous est décrite par Bataille, dont nous connaissons les participants (mais il n'importe) et qui n'était pas destinée à la publication (pourtant s'y maintient la réserve d'un certain incognito: l'interlocuteur n'est pas désigné, mais il est montré tel que ses amis puissent le reconnaître, sans le nommer; il est l'amitié, non moins que l'ami), est suivie (datée d'un autre jour) de cette affirmation: 'Un dieu ne s'occupe pas.' Ce non-agir est l'un des traits du désoeuvrement, et l'amitié, avec la lecture de l'ivresse, est la forme même de la 'communauté déseouvrée' sur laquelle Jean-Luc Nancy nous a appelé à réfléchir sans qu'il nous soit permis de nous y arrêter" (*La Communauté inavouable* [Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1983], 42–43).]

16. For a helpful discussion of the difficulties of translating "unworking" (which has also been rendered as "inoperative"), see Pierre Joris, "Translator's Preface" to *The Unavowable Community,* xi–xxix. Joris speculates about the tendency of Anglophone readers to miss the positive connotations of this term: "There may be a radical cultural difference at work here: the puritan impulses of Anglo-American culture blocking the very possibility of a positive, active connotation to be attached to the notion of an absence of work?" (xxiv).

17. Once again, as noted in the previous chapter, Blanchot's writing, unlike Bataille's, is so calm and inscrutable that the value of shock is completely absent from it.

18. Bataille died in 1962. *L'Amitié* was published in 1971, whereas *La Communauté inavouable* did not appear until 1983. Both, and especially the latter work, give the impression that Bataille has died recently. It is also interesting to note that both Blanchot and Montaigne let roughly a decade pass before writing of the dead friend with such an intensity that the friend's passing seems more immediate. La Boétie died in 1563, and "De l'amitié" dates to around 1576.

19. Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community,* 23–24. ["Ces mouvements ne sont qu'apparemment contradictoires. 'Celui pour qui j'écris' est celui qu'on ne peut connaître, il est l'inconnu, et le rapport avec l'inconnu, fût-ce par l'écriture, m'expose à la mort ou à la finitude, cette mort qui n'a pas en elle de quoi apaiser la mort. Qu'en est-il alors de l'amitié? *Amitié: amitié pour l'inconnu sans amis.* Ou encore, si l'amitié en appelle à la communauté par l'écriture, elle ne peut que s'excepter d'elle-même (*amitié pour l'exigence d'écrire qui exclut toute amitié*)" (44).] The

middle part of this passage has striking affinities with the following passage from Derrida's *The Gift of Death:* "It is the gift and endurance of death that exists in the irreplaceable, the disproportion between the infinite gift and my finitude" (trans. David Wills [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995], 56). While Derrida repeatedly affirms the importance of death and finitude, there is, as I will suggest at the end of this chapter, a way in which friendship nevertheless exceeds these dimensions.

20. Blanchot makes an almost parallel formulation with respect to the community, a term set forth in Jean-Luc Nancy's *La Communauté désoeuvrée* (Paris: Christian Bourgois Editeur, 1986). He writes that "the community, as Jean-Luc Nancy says, maintains itself only as the place—the non-place—where nothing is owned, its secret being that it has no secret, working only at the unworking that traverses even writing" (19). ["La communauté, comme le dit Jean-Luc Nancy, ne se maintient que comme le lieu—le non-lieu—où il n'y a rien à détenir, secrète de n'avoir aucun secret, n'oeuvrant qu'au désoeuvrement qui traverse l'écriture même" (38).] For "sequels" to the books on community by Nancy and Blanchot, see Giorgio Agamben's *The Coming Community,* trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993) and Alphonso Lingis, *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).

21. In *Perfect Friendship,* Ullrich Langer traces the varying versions and translations of this phrase, which has its origin not in Aristotle per se but in Diogenes Laertius's description of Aristotle. It seems that the version of Diogenes Laertius that Montaigne consulted emphasized the contradictory aspect of this statement, while other versions render it as meaning that it is only possible to have one, and not many, true friends. See Langer, 18–20.

22. Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community,* 20. ["La communication nocturne, celle qui ne s'avoue pas, qui s'antidate et ne s'autorise que d'un auteur inexistant, n'ouvre une autre forme de communauté, quand un petit nombre d'amis, chacun singulier, et sans rapport obligé des uns avec les autres, la composent en secret par la lecture silencieuse qu'ils partagent en prenant conscience de l'événement exceptionnel auquel ils sont confrontés ou voués" (*La Communauté inavouable,* 39).]

23. Even between two, there is always a plurality at work, always others that populate a relationship. Deleuze describes this phenomenon in *Dialogues,* with Claire Parnet, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Hab-

berjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), when he writes of his relationship with Félix Guattari that "we were only two, but what was important for us was less our working together than this strange fact of working between the two of us. We stopped being 'author.' And these 'between-the-twos' referred back to other people, who were different on one side from on the other. The desert expanded, but in so doing became more populous. . . . In these conditions, as soon as there is this type of multiplicity, there is politics, micro-politics" (17). To borrow these terms, it is the "micro-politics" of a different form of literary friendship and all it portends for rethinking our very idea of what constitutes proper communication that is the political stake of this study.

24. Michel Foucault, "La Pensée du dehors," *Critique* 229 (1966): 523–46, and Maurice Blanchot, *Michel Foucault tel que je l'imagine* (Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1986), are collected in *Foucault, Blanchot,* "Maurice Blanchot, The Thought from Outside," trans. Brian Massumi, and "Michel Foucault as I Imagine Him," trans. Jeffrey Mehlman (New York: Zone Books, 1987). In addition, there is a brief section on Foucault in Blanchot's *L'Entretien infini,* trans. Susan Hanson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), "The Great Confinement," 196–201; *L'Entretien infini* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), "Le Grand Renfermement," 291–99.

25. Blanchot, *Michel Foucault as I Imagine Him,* 63–64. ["Quelques mots personnels. Précisément, je suis resté avec Michel Foucault sans relations personnelles. Je ne l'ai jamais rencontré, sauf une fois dans la cour de la Sorbonne pendant les événements de Mai 68, peut-être en juin ou juillet (mais on me dit qu'il n'était pas là), ou je lui addressai quelques mots, lui-même ignorant qui lui parlait (quoi que disent les détracteurs de Mai, ce fut un beau moment, lorsque chacun pouvait parler à l'autre, anonyme, impersonnel, homme parmi les hommes, accueilli sans autre justification que d'être un homme). Il est vrai que, durant ces événements extraordinaires, je disais souvent: Mais pourquoi Foucault n'est-il-pas là? lui restituant ainsi son pouvoir d'attrait et considérant la place vide qu'il aurait dû occuper. A quoi on me répondait par une remarque qui ne me contentait pas: il reste un peu réservé; ou bien: il est à l'étranger. Mais précisément beaucoup d'étrangers et jusqu'aux lointains Japonais étaient là. C'est ainsi peut-être que nous nous sommes manqués" (*Michel Foucault tel que je l'imagine,* 9–10).] It seems unlikely that the two ever met, since Foucault was teaching in Tunisia at that point. However, there remains a remnant of doubt. In his biography of Fou-

cault, David Macey notes that Foucault actually did pass through Paris in late May of 1968 (*The Lives of Michel Foucault* [New York: Pantheon Books, 1993], xvii). I wish to thank Michael Hardt who, at an early stage in my research, brought this passage to my attention and narrated it so humorously that I was immediately inspired to look it up. It has proven central in my formulation of the entire project.

26. For another "autobiographical" moment, see Blanchot's most recent essay-length book, *L'Instant de ma mort* (Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1994). See also Derrida's book-length close reading of *L'Instant de ma mort*, *Demeure: Maurice Blanchot* (Paris: Galilée, 1998) and Hent de Vries's " 'Lapsus Absolu': Notes on Maurice Blanchot's *The Instant of my Death,*" in *Yale French Studies* 93 (1998): 30–59. De Vries's essay details Derrida's different readings of Blanchot on the question of death. Philippe Mesnard has argued that all of Blanchot's work is enigmatically autobiographical (seminar on Blanchot at the Collège de Philosophie in Paris, spring 1995) and Christophe Bident's stunning and unprecedented biography, *Maurice Blanchot, partenaire invisible* (Seyssel: Editions Champ Vallon, 1998) amply demonstrates this point. For a review of Bident's book, see Jeffrey Mehlman, "Vie et oeuvre de Maurice Blanchot: Le Partage du mythe," *Critique* 630 (November 1999): 942–52.

27. James Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 82.

28. The quest for extant photographs of Blanchot is a small cottage industry among Blanchot aficionados. One need only look on the internet for lengthy discussions of this topic. Steven Ungar documents the sources of two such photographs in *Scandal and Aftereffect: Blanchot and France Since 1930* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 4–5, 174. *Scandal and Aftereffect* meticulously documents Blanchot's writings between 1932 and 1937 for the right-wing and proto-Fascist journals *Combat, L'Insurgé,* and *Le Rempart.* It also compares Blanchot's prewartime journalism to the more publicized cases of Martin Heidegger and Paul de Man. While it is interesting to read Blanchot's markedly philo-Semitic career against the background of these writings, my contention is that it is next to impossible, particularly in the case of Blanchot, to make any sort of causal connection in these matters, and indeed that such contradictions mark an entire generation of French intellectuals. For more on this with regard to Blanchot, see Jeffrey Mehlman, *Legacies of Anti-Semitism in France* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983). In defense of Blanchot, it is widely known that his

politics changed in the course of the war and that, among other things, he helped Emmanuel Levinas's family escape from the Nazis.

29. Cited in Michael Holland, "Towards a Method" in *Sub-Stance* 14 (1976): 12. ["la même puissance impersonnelle qui, comme obstacle et comme ressource, est à l'origine de l'effort littéraire" (*Le Livre à venir* [Paris: Gallimard, 1971], 361).]

30. Such a scenario is eminently Blanchotian and recurs in different guises in several of Blanchot's fictional works. See, for example, the novel *Aminadab* (Paris: Gallimard, 1942) in which the narrator even more randomly enters a house (in response to a woman beckoning to him from the second floor), and this house turns out to be a strange Kafkaesque world where the narrator inadvertantly becomes caught up in an unfathomably regimented system of masters and servants from which he cannot extricate himself. More uncanny still is the fact that the masters and servants keep changing places, and the narrator finds himself oscillating between the two subject positions without ever really knowing what is going on. At the most twisted moment in the narrative, the narrator realizes that he has been the house's executioner all along. For an interesting though unsubtle reading of *Aminadab* as a direct reflection on, and condemnation of, the Vichy regime, see Deborah M. Hess, *Politics and Literature: The Case of Maurice Blanchot* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 173–89.

31. Maurice Blanchot, *When the Time Comes*, trans. Lydia Davis (Barrytown, N.Y.: Station Hill Press, 1985), 30–31. ["la discrétion avec laquelle tout cela avait lieu . . . et toujours voilée par un certain air impersonnel; imperceptiblement, elle avait placé entre nous un sentiment de réserve qui la laissait et me laissait libre beaucoup plus que n'importe quel mur" (*Au moment voulu* [Paris: Gallimard, 1951], 72).] For an intriguing reading of *Au moment voulu* that links the spatial arrangement of the apartment to bifurcations in chaos theory, see Deborah Hess, *Complexity in Maurice Blanchot's Fiction: Relations Between Science and Literature* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 265–83. For a wonderful discussion of apartments (or flats) in Blanchot's fiction, see Thomas Carl Wall, *Radical Passivity: Levinas, Blanchot, and Agamben* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), 79–82.

32. Derrida, *Politiques de l'amitié,* 326–27 [294]. ["de penser et de vivre la douce rigeur de l'amitié, la loi de l'amitié comme l'expérience d'une certaine anhumanité, dans la séparation absolue, au-delà ou endeça du commerce des dieux et des hommes."]

33. Reda Bensmaïa, *The Barthes Effect: The Essay as Reflective Text,* trans. Pat Fedkiew (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 68.

34. Blanchot, *Michel Foucault,* 69. ["Foucault, qui écrit d'abondance, est un être silencieux, davantage: acharné à garder le silence lorsque les questionneurs bienveillants ou malveillants lui demandent de s'expliquer" (19).]

35. Derrida, *Politiques de l'amitié,* 71 [53]. ["L'amitié ne garde pas le silence, elle est gardée par le silence".]

36. Ibid., 81 [62]. ["La 'bonne amitié' suppose la disproportion. Elle exige une certaine rupture de réciprocité ou d'égalité, l'interruption aussi de toute fusion ou confusion entre toi et moi."]

37. Pierre Macherey, "Le 'Lysis' de Platon: Dilemme de l'amitié et de l'amour," in *L'Amitié: Dans son harmonie, dans ses dissonances* (Paris: Editions Autrement, 1995), 58–75. See especially 59–60 and 74.

38. Bensmaïa, *The Barthes Effect,* 63.

39. Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault,* ed. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick M. Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 27. See also Foucault's comments on friendship in *The History of Sexuality,* vol. 3, *The Care of the Self,* trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 204–7, especially with regard to Plutarch and the dynamics of friendship in the married couple.

40. Foucault, "Thought from the Outside," 16. ["au-delà de tout langage, silence, au delà de tout être, néant" ("La Pensée du dehors," 526).]

41. Ibid., 16–19 [526–27].

42. Ibid., 18–19 ["cette expérience . . . réapparaît . . . chez Artaud, lorsque tout langage discursif est appelé à se dénouer dans la violence du corps et du cri, et que la pensée quittant l'intériorité bavarde de la conscience, devient énergie matérielle, souffrance de la chair, persécution et déchirement du sujet lui-même; chez Bataille, lorsque la pensée au lieu d'être discours de la contradiction ou de l'inconscient, devient celui de la limite, de la subjectivité rompue, de la transgression; chez Klossowski, avec l'expérience du double, de l'extériorité des simulacres, de la multiplication théâtrale et démente du Moi. De cette pensée Blanchot n'est peut-être pas seulement l'un des témoins. Tant il se retire dans la manifestation de son oeuvre, tant il est, non pas caché par ces textes, mais absent de leur existence et absent par la force merveilleuse de leur existence, il est plutôt pour nous cette pensée même—la présence réelle, absolu-

ment lointaine, scintillante, invisible, le sort nécessaire, la loi inévitable, la vigueur calme, infinie, mesurée de cette pensée même" (527).]

43. In an earlier passage in "Thought from the Outside," Foucault writes that "thought about thought, an entire tradition wider than philosophy, has taught us that thought leads us to the deepest interiority. Speech about speech leads us, by way of literature, as well as perhaps by other paths, to the outside in which the speaking subject disappears" (13). ["La pensée de la pensée, toute une tradition plus large encore que la philosophie nous a appris qu'elle nous conduisait à l'intériorité la plus profonde. La parole de la parole nous mène par la littérature, mais peut-être aussi par d'autres chemins, à ce dehors où disparaît le sujet qui parle" ("La Pensée du dehors," 525).] In *Singularities: Extremes of Theory in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), Thomas Pepper cites a similar passage from Foucault on Blanchot's "thought from the outside" and questions the seamlessness of Foucault's reading of Blanchot, suggesting that the "scar" or impurity in Foucault's commentary only comes by way of critique: "My enterprise is 'about' the necessity of the contamination that might be seen 'behind' the purity of Foucault's seamlessness, about the necessity of the scar inflicted by him on the text-body of 'Blanchot' by the need to make it all dovetail so nicely, for the purposes of such a good lesson, such a good literary essay. The scar, after all, only exists in and by virtue of the act of commentary, of *critique*" (181). To my mind, this is a very important distinction: while the mode of critique highlights the impurities of discourse, the mode of encomium at issue here seeks to erase them, to obliterate the impurities and the scars at the service of thought itself, an absolute and corporealizing thought.

44. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 69. ["Ce ne sont pas deux amis qui s'exercent à penser, c'est la pensée qui exige que le penseur soit un ami, pour qu'elle se partage en elle-même et puisse s'exercer. C'est la pensée même qui exige ce partage de pensée entre amis" (*Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* [Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1991], 68).]

45. Ibid., 4–5. ["Et quand aujourd'hui Maurice Blanchot, qui fait partie des rares penseurs à considérer le sens du mot 'ami' dans philosophie, reprend cette question intérieure des conditions de la pensée comme telle, n'est-ce pas de nouveaux personnages conceptuels encore qu'il introduit au sein du plus pur Pensé?" (10).] It seems that Deleuze

and Guattari's concept of "Pensé" is comparable to what I am here calling "the materiality of thought," though its grammatical masculinization might be called into question.

46. For more on the role of the body in instigating a materiality of thought, see chapter 5, on Deleuze and Klossowski.

47. Foucault, "Thought from the Outside," 48. ["De là que le compagnon vaut à la fois comme une exigence à laquelle on est toujours inégal et une pesanteur dont on voudrait s'affranchir; à lui, on est lié invinciblement selon une familiarité difficile à supporter et pourtant il faudrait s'en approcher encore, trouver avec lui un lien qui ne soit pas cette absence de lien par laquelle on est attaché à lui selon la forme sans visage de l'absence" ("La Pensée du dehors," 540–41).] For an analysis that links facelessness to the companion, see Blanchot's laudatory essay on Emmanuel Levinas, "Our Clandestine Companion," in *Face to Face with Levinas,* ed. Richard A. Cohen (Albany: SUNY Press, 1986).

48. For a revaluing of Schmitt's pejorative notion of the friend (as opposed to the enemy), see Derrida, *Politiques de l'amitié,* chaps. 4–6 (93–193) [75–170].

49. Jacques Derrida, "The Politics of Friendship," *Journal of Philosophy* 85, no. 11 (1988): 634.

50. Ibid., 635.

51. Ibid., 635–36.

52. Ibid., 636–37. Such an analysis of friendship as a space of promise and an opening to the future has striking affinities with the Italian philosopher Paolo Virno's notion of the "miracle." Virno writes that "because it is contained within the magnetic field defined by the mutually changing interrelations of Action, Work, and Intellect, the Miracle is rather something that is *awaited but unexpected.* As happens in every oxymoron, the two terms are in mutual tension, but inseparable. If what was in question was only the salvation offered by an 'unexpected,' or only a long-term 'waiting,' then we could be dealing, respectively, with the most insignificant notion of causality or the most banal calculation of the relationship between means and ends. Rather, it is an exception that is especially surprising to the one who was awaiting it" ("Virtuosity and the Revolution: The Political Theory of Exodus," in *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics,* ed. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996], 209). Like Derrida, Virno uses, yet ultimately overturns, Karl Schmitt's pejorative notion of the friend. Virno proposes an alternate definition of friendship that

would not merely oppose the friend and the enemy: "It [is] necessary to give a certain autonomy to the notion of 'friendship,' retrieving it from the subaltern and parasitic status that Carl Schmitt assigns it. The characteristic of the 'friend' is not merely that of sharing the same 'enemy'; it is defined by the relations of solidarity that are established in the course of flight—by the necessity of working *together* to invent opportunities that up until that point have not been computed" (205).

53. Blanchot, *Michel Foucault tel que je l'imagine,* 108; *Michel Foucault as I Imagine Him,* 62–63.

54. Ibid., 108–9, trans. modified. ["C'est ainsi qu'il sera tenté de demander aux Anciens la revalorisation des pratiques amicales, lesquelles, sans se perdre, n'ont plus retrouvé, sauf chez quelques-uns d'entre nous, leur haute vertu. . . . L'amitié fut peut-être promise à Foucault comme un don posthume, par-delà les passions, les problèmes de pensée, les dangers de la vie qu'il ressentait pour les autres plus que pour lui-même. En témoignant pour une oeuvre qui a besoin d'être étudiée (lue sans parti pris) plutôt que louée, je pense rester fidèle, fût-ce maladroitment, à l'amitié intellectuelle que sa mort, pour moi très douloureuse, me permet aujourd'hui de lui déclarer: tandis que je me remémore la parole attribuée par Diogène Laërce à Aristote: '*O mes amis, il n'y a pas d'ami*' " (63–64).]

55. See Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death,* trans. David Wills (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), where Derrida brings together all at once the questions of the gift, singularity, responsibility, and death. See especially 55–56, where Derrida writes: "It is the gift of infinite love [that makes us tremble], the dissymmetry that exists between the divine regard that sees me, and myself, who doesn't see what is looking at me; it is the gift and endurance of death that exists in the irreplaceable, the disproportion between the infinite gift and my finitude, responsibility as culpability, sin, salvation, repentance, and sacrifice." I would suggest that this experience of gift, dissymmetry, and responsibility, while in some ways conditioned by death, also endures before and after death.

56. Derrida, *Politiques de l'amitié,* 115 [94]. ["Aucun grand discours sur l'amitié . . . n'aura jamais échappé à la grande rhetorique de l'*epitáphios,* et donc à quelque célébration transie de spectralité, à la fois fervente et déjà gagnée par la froideur cadavérique ou pétrifiée de son inscription, du devenir-*épitaphe* de l'oraison. Ils ne nous convaincront pas du contraire, les grands exemples qui nous attendent, de Montaigne à Blanchot."]

57. Ibid., 335 [302]. ["C'est *grâce* à la mort que l'amitié peut se déclarer. Jamais auparavant, jamais autrement."] It should be noted that Blanchot's first essay devoted to Derrida takes up a similar formulation in its title: "Grâce (soit rendue) à Jacques Derrida," *Revue philosophique* 2 (1990): 167–73. See "Thanks (Be Given) to Jacques Derrida," in *The Blanchot Reader,* ed. Michael Holland (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1995), 317–23.

58. Ibid., 334–35 [301]. ["L'audace inouïe d'un 'tandis que,' après deux points, ouvre une subordonnée solitaire, elle suspend toute la déclaration dans l'*epokhē* de ce temps intemporel qui sied au deuil mais qui annule aussi d'avance tout ce qui pourrait bien être dit en ce dire et déclaré en cette déclaration. Deux points: un acte de ponctuation aura-t-il jamais tendu ainsi un voile de deuil, suspendant jusqu'à l'enchaînement logique, ne laissant paraître que la contiguïté, la contemporanéité de deux ordres temporels seulement juxtaposés, sans rapport intérieur l'un avec l'autre? Aura-t-on jamais ponctué avec plus de rigueur, d'économie, de réserve, laissant même ouverte l'hypothèse, mais ne nous y arrêtons pas, que là, peut-être, personne n'est plus là pour personne, et c'est bien la mort, ce mourir dont Blanchot s'est plaint, si souvent, si profondément, non qu'il fût fatal mais qu'il restât impossible?"]

Four Madness and Repetition

1. Louis Althusser, *For Marx,* trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Pantheon Books, 1969).

2. Louis Althusser, *L'Avenir dure longtemps* (Paris: Editions Stock, 1992), 152. ["un homosexual douloureux mais chaleureux dans la distance de sa schizophrénie latente, un ami incomparable."] This work was translated into English after the writing of this essay. For purposes of argument, I have opted to retain my translation, but I include page references to the official translation in brackets. See Louis Althusser, *The Future Lasts Forever: A Memoir,* ed. Olivier Corpet and Yann Moulier Boutang, trans. Richard Vesey (New York: New Press, 1993), [133].

3. These details are taken from Yann Moulier Boutang, *Louis Althusser: Une Biographie,* vol. 1, *La Formation du mythe, 1918–1956* (Paris: Grasset, 1992), 258–59, 449–60. Apart from Althusser's references to Martin in *L'Avenir dure longtemps* (see below), this is one of the only existing documentations on Martin's life.

4. Boutang writes: "One day, [Althusser] explained to us that Martin

had destroyed all of his papers and that, moreover, he was '*a philosopher without work,*' an expression that Foucault and [Althusser] himself consecrated, and which probably comes from Jacques Martin himself" (*Louis Althusser,* 258). ["[Althusser] nous avait expliqué un jour que Martin avait détruit tous ses papiers et que c'était d'autre part '*un philosophe sans oeuvre,*' expression que Foucault et lui-même ont consacrée, et qui provient probablement de Jacques Martin lui-même".] Note here that I have chosen to translate "l'absence d'oeuvre" as "the absence of work." It could equally be translated as "the absence of *the* work" or "the absence of *a* work," both of which might preclude confusion in English between two definitions: (1) work, as in a masterpiece (*oeuvre*) and (2) work, as in carrying out a task (which would be *travail* in French). Since *oeuvre*, at least in certain rare French locutions, can be translated by *travail*, it seems fitting that the definitional ambiguity, which is all the stronger in English, be retained.

5. Althusser, *L'Avenir dure longtemps* ["grâce à Jacques Martin"]. See, for example, 188 [166], 192 [170], 202 [179], 206–7[183], 446 [NA].

6. Ibid., 446 [NA]. ["le seul qui m'ait donné une idée (et vraie) de la philosophie, ça a été Martin. Grâce à lui j'ai pu avoir une idée stratégique d'ensemble de la situation philosophique, et quelques repères theoriques absolument essentiels pour s'y *orienter.*"]

7. Ibid., 356–57 [323]. ["C'était l'esprit le plus aigu qu'il m'ait jamais été donné de rencontrer, implacable comme un juriste, meticuleux comme une addition, et doué d'un humour macabre qui le faisait redouter de tous les curés. En tout cas, il m'apprit à penser, et surtout qu'on pouvait penser autrement que ne le pretendaient nos maîtres. Sans lui, je n'aurais jamais aligné deux idées."]

8. David Macey, in *The Lives of Michel Foucault* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), notes that "Foucault never spoke of Jacques Martin in print, but, like Althusser, he may have borrowed something from him. From 1961 onwards, he would define madness as 'l'absence d'oeuvre' " (26). Macey also cites Artaud as a source for this definition of madness (102).

9. Michel Foucault, *Raymond Roussel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1963) [*Death and the Labyrinth: The World of Raymond Roussel,* trans. Charles Ruas (New York: Doubleday, 1986; London: Athlone, 1987)]; and *Naissance de la clinique* (Paris: P.U.F., 1963) [*The Birth of the Clinic,* trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Pantheon, 1973)].

10. Michel Foucault, "La Folie, l'absence d'oeuvre," in *La Table ronde*

196 (May 1964): 11–21. Reprinted in *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique,* 2nd ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), appendix I, 575–82.

11. Ibid., 580. ["Depuis Freud, la folie occidentale est devenue un non-langage parce qu'elle est devenue un langage double (langue qui n'existe que dans cette parole, parole qui ne dit que sa langue)—c'est à dire une matrice du langage qui, au sens strict, ne dit rien. Pli du parlé qui est une absence d'oeuvre."]

12. Ibid., 580–81. ["Découverte comme un langage se taisant dans sa superposition à lui-même, la folie ne manifeste ni ne raconte la naissance d'une oeuvre . . . ; elle designe la forme vide d'où vient cette oeuvre, c'est-à-dire le lieu d'où elle ne cesse d'être absente, où jamais on ne la trouvera parce qu'elle ne s'y est jamais trouvée. Là en cette région pâle, sous cette cache essentielle, se devoile l'incompatibilité gémellaire de l'oeuvre et de la folie; c'est le point aveugle de leur possibilité à chacune et de leur exclusion mutuelle. Mais depuis Raymond Roussel, depuis Artaud, c'est aussi bien le lieu d'où s'approche le langage de la littérature."]

13. See Raymond Bellour, "L'Homme, les mots," *Magazine littéraire* 101 (June 1975): 20–23; Jean Roudaut, "Bibliothèque imaginaire," *Magazine littéraire* 207 (May 1984): 46–47; Denis Hollier, "Le Mot de Dieu: 'Je suis mort,'" in *Michel Foucault philosophe, rencontre internationale* (Paris: Seuil, 1989), 150–65; Raymond Bellour, "Vers la fiction," in *Michel Foucault philosophe,* 172–81; Judith Revel, "Histoire d'une disparition. Foucault et la littérature," *Extrait du Débat* 79 (March-April 1994): 82–90; Frédéric Gros, "Littérature et folie," *Magazine littéraire* 325 (October 1994): 46–48.

14. Such a mechanism, by which the ultimate work of literature would be that which expresses the failure of language to ever produce an ultimate work of literature, is definitively illustrated by Paul de Man, especially in his early writings between 1952 and 1960. See *Critical Writings 1953–1978,* ed. Lindsay Waters (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989). De Man is in many regards the "American" counterpart to the constellation of French intellectuals discussed here, though of course his preeminently European upbringing and education puts his Americanness into strange relief.

15. The book on Roussel was inspired by Foucault's reading of Roussel's *Comment j'ai écrit certains de mes livres* [How I wrote some of my books] (Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1963), which Roussel prepared shortly before his suicide in Palermo in 1933 and which was first published in 1935. The parallels between this work and Althusser's *L'Avenir*

dure longtemps are indeed striking. Both are situated around death, Roussel's book after the death of his mother and just before his suicide, Althusser's after the death of his wife, Hélène Rytman, and just before his own death. There is, to be sure, a difference on the one hand between "natural" death and suicide and, on the other hand, between murder and "natural" death, yet the comparison at issue here would hope to question the very notion that these are hard and fast distinctions. It is interesting to note, in this regard, that Althusser sees a vision of Jacques Martin as he was found lying in his bed several days after his suicide just as Althusser completes the act of strangling his wife (*L'Avenir dure longtemps,* 34–35 [16]).

16. Denis Hollier, "Le Mot de Dieu," 159. Hollier then extends the comparison by delineating the role of the mirror as the marker of that liminal space of life that death makes visible. It should also be noted that when Roussel's mother died he had a pane of glass fitted into the top of her coffin, an act which has been the subject of much speculation (157).

17. Michel Foucault, *L'Archéologie du savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969); *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Pantheon, 1972).

18. Raymond Bellour, "Vers la fiction," 175.

19. Gilles Deleuze, "Un Portrait de Foucault," in *Pourparlers* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1990), 145. ["Le livre de Foucault sur Roussel (1963) est déjà comme la version poétique et de la théorie des énoncés que Foucault crée dans *L'archéologie* (1969)."] *Pourparlers* has also been translated into English since the writing of this book. Once again, I am retaining my translation with the page numbers from the official translation in brackets. See Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations 1972–1990,* trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), [107].

20. Foucault explores Roussel's method of narratively linking two sentences that differ only by one letter but have wildly disparate significations. The best-known example of this in Roussel is the fantastic narrative in "Parmi les noirs" (which served as the basis for Roussel's *Nouvelles Impressions d'Afrique* [Paris: Librairie Alphonse Lemerre, 1932]) that links the two sentences:

> Les lettres du blanc sur les bandes du vieux billard.
>
> Les lettres du blanc sur les bandes du vieux pillard.

See Foucault's "Les Bandes du billard" in *Raymond Roussel,* 21–40. For a helpful commentary on Foucault's analysis of Roussel, see Pierre Macherey, "Foucault lecteur de Roussel: La Littérature comme philoso-

phie," in *A quoi pense la littérature? Exercises de philosophie littéraire* (Paris: P.U.F., 1990), 177–91.

21. Raymond Roussel, *La Doublure* (Paris: Librairie Alphonse Lemerre, 1897). For an account of this work's composition, see Rayner Heppenstall's often-hilarious guide to Roussel, *Raymond Roussel* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1966), 2–3, 10–31. For a more scholarly treatment of Roussel, see Sjef Houppermans, *Raymond Roussel: Ecriture et désir* (Paris: Librairie Jose Corti, 1985), particularly the final chapter, "Le Sexte et les doubles" (317–64), where *La Doublure* is taken as the ultimate key, a sort of mirror stage (363), to all of the doubles in Roussel's oeuvre. See also Michel Carrouges, *Les Machines célibataires* (Paris: Editions Arcanes, 1954), 60–92.

22. Foucault, *Raymond Roussel,* 151, 153, 155, 156. ["doublure dédoublée, il n'est plus rien qu'un silence, un regard, des gestes ralentis qui se deploient dans l'espace vide d'en dessous des masques"; "accroc qui dédouble le double et le restitue aussitôt en sa merveilleuse unité"; "il s'agit de la même figure d'un langage dédoublé à l'interieur duquel vient se loger une scène visible produite par le seul appel de cette distance"; "mais cette ombre douce qui, au-dessous de leur surface et de leur masque, rend les choses visibles et fait qu'on peut en parler, n'est-ce pas dès leur naissance, la proximité de la mort, de la mort qui dédouble le monde comme on pèle un fruit?"]

23. "La Folie, l'absence d'oeuvre," 582. ["loin du pathologique, du côté du langage, là où se replie sans encore rien dire, une expérience est en train de naître ou il y va de notre pensée; son imminence, déjà visible mais vide absolument ne peut encore être nommée."]

24. Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1986); *Foucault,* trans. Sean Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

25. Gilles Deleuze, "Fendre les choses, fendre les mots" in *Pourparlers,* 115 [83]. ["On se souvient plus d'un geste ou d'un rire que des dates."] ["Je l'ai connu vers 1962, quand il finissait d'écrire *Raymond Roussel* et *Naissance de la clinique.*"]

26. The idea of the nonrelation is taken from Maurice Blanchot. See especially "The Relation of the Third Kind (man without horizon)" in *The Infinite Conversation,* trans. Susan Hanson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 66–74. Blanchot also writes of "the outside, the absence of work" (33) and states that "to write is to produce the absence of the work" (424).

27. Deleuze, "Fendre les choses, fendre les mots," 117 [84]. ["Ce n'est pas un travail de deuil, le non-deuil demande encore plus de travail. Si mon livre pouvait être encore autre chose, je ferais appel à une notion constante chez Foucault, celle de double. Foucault est hanté par le double, y compris dans l'altérité propre au double. J'ai voulu extraire un double de Foucault, au sens qu'il donnait à ce mot: répétition, doublure, retour du même, accroc, imperceptible différence, dédoublement et fatale déchirure."]

28. James Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 194. The homophobic implications of Miller's argument have been highly criticized because he suggests that essentially all of Foucault's life and work were a quest for the "limit-experience" (the "passion" of the title) and that the trajectory of Foucault's interest in suicide, his S/M experiences in San Francisco, and his eventual death from AIDS represents the crowning finale to a lifelong quest. For a critique of this position, see John Guillory, "The Americanization of Michel Foucault," in *Lesbian and Gay Studies Newsletter* (July 1993): 35–37. Criticism notwithstanding, it is striking to note that Miller's mode of analysis—the reconstructing of a life from the events of a death—is reminiscent of Foucault's own approach in *Naissance de la clinique* and *Raymond Roussel* (see Hollier, above).

29. "Un Portrait de Foucault," 139 [102]. ["J'éprouvais un veritable besoin d'écrire ce livre. Quand quelqu'un meurt qu'on aime et qu'on admire, on a parfois besoin de faire un dessin de lui. Pas pour le glorifier, encore moins pour le défendre, pas pour la mémoire, mais plutôt pour en tirer cette ressemblance ultime qui ne peut venir que de sa mort, en qui fait dire 'c'est lui.' Un masque, où ce qu'il appelait lui-même un double, une doublure."]

30. Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community,* trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 23.

31. Gilles Deleuze, "La Vie comme oeuvre d'art," in *Pourparlers,* 138 [100–101]. ["Le style, chez un grand écrivain, c'est toujours aussi un style de vie, non pas du tout quelque chose de personnel, mais l'invention d'une possibilité de vie, d'un mode d'existence. C'est curieux comme on dit parfois que les philosophes n'ont pas de style, ou qu'ils écrivent mal. Ce doit être parce qu'on ne les lit pas. Pour en rester à la France, Descartes, Malebranche, Maine de Biran, Bergson, même Auguste Comte avec son côté Balzac, sont des stylistes. Or, Foucault s'inscrit aussi dans cette lignée, c'est un grand styliste. Le concept prend chez lui des

valeurs rythmiques, ou de contrepoint comme dans les curieux dialogues avec soi par lesquels il termine certains de ses livres. Sa syntaxe recueille les miroitements, les scintillements du visible, mais aussi se tord comme une lanière, se plie et se déplie, ou claque à la mesure des énoncés."]

32. Ibid., 135 [98–99]. ["Un processus de subjectivation, c'est-à-dire une production de mode d'existence, ne peut pas se confondre avec un sujet, à moins de destituer celui-ci de toute interiorité et même de toute identité. La subjectivation n'a même rien à voir avec la 'personne': c'est une individuation, particulière ou collective, qui caracterise un événement (une heure du jour, un fleuve, un vent, une vie . . .). C'est un mode intensif et non pas un sujet personnel."]

33. Deleuze, "Un Portrait de Foucault," 156 [115]. ["La subjectivation, c'est la production des modes d'existence ou styles de vie . . . . La subjectivation comme processus, c'est une individuation . . . . Il y a des individuations du type 'sujet' (c'est toi . . . c'est moi . . .), mais il y a aussi des individuations de type événement, sans sujet: un vent, une atmosphere, une heure de la journée, une bataille . . . Il n'est pas sûr qu'une vie, ou une oeuvre d'art, soit individuée comme un sujet, au contraire. Foucault lui-même, on ne le saisissait pas exactement comme une personne. Même dans des occasions insignifiantes, quand il entrait dans une pièce, c'était plutôt comme un changement d'atmosphere, une sorte d'événement, un champ électrique ou magnetique, ce que vous voudrez. Cela n'excluait pas du tout la douceur ou le bienêtre, mais ce n'était pas de l'ordre de la personne. C'était un ensemble d'intensités."]

34. Deleuze, *Foucault,* 50, my italics, trans. modified. ["Foucault n'a une joie d'énoncer, et de découvrir les énoncés des autres, que parce qu'il a aussi une passion de voir: ce qui le definit *lui-même* avant tout, la voix, mais aussi les yeux. *Les yeux, la voix.* Foucault n'a jamais cessé d'être un voyant, en même temps qu'il marquait la philosophie d'un nouveau style d'énoncés, les deux sur un pas différent, sur un double rythme," *Foucault,* 58.] See also the interview "The Intellectual and Politics: Foucault and the Prison," in *History of the Present* 2 (Spring 1986): 1–2, 20–21, where Deleuze twice describes Foucault as a "seer."

35. As Deleuze explicates the "énoncé," "things must be taken for visibilities to be extracted. . . . Likewise, words or sentences must be split for statements to be extracted. . . . Foucault's great historical principle is: each historical formation says all it can say and sees all it can see" ["il faut prendre les choses pour en extraire les visibilitiés. . . . De même, il faut fendre les mots ou les phrases pour en extraire les énoncés. . . . Le grand

principe historique de Foucault, c'est: toute formation historique dit tout ce qu'elle peut dire, et voit tout ce qu'elle peut voir" ("La Vie comme oeuvre d'art," 132 [96]).

36. Here I should make an observation on the "grain of the voice"—Deleuze's voice, accessible on the cassette recordings of his lecture course on Foucault, "Foucault: Savoir, pouvoir, subjectivation," given at Paris VIII from October 29, 1985 to January 7, 1986. These recordings were available at the Centre Michel Foucault in the Bibliothèque du Saulchoir in Paris but have been transferred, since the writing of this book, to the IMEC collection, also in Paris. Deleuze's lectures, which preceded his *Foucault,* present an incomparably clear and systematic overview of his thinking on Foucault and are often punctuated with soft-spoken references to the beauty of Foucault's writings. For example, when making a page reference, he often uses turns of phrase such as "as Foucault says on a very beautiful page of . . . " ["comme dit Foucault dans une page très belle de . . ."] or "developed by Foucault in a masterly fashion . . . " ["developpé par Foucault d'une manière magistrale . . ."].

37. This disagreement arose around the much-publicized Croissant affair: the West German lawyer Klaus Croissant, one of the principle defense attorneys in the 1975 trial of the "Baader-Meinhof gang," had escaped to France when he was about to be sentenced in Germany for unlawful support of the defendants. Facing extradition to Germany, Croissant was supported by a powerful group of French intellectuals and luminaries, and a petition was circulated on his behalf. While both Foucault and Deleuze supported Croissant, Foucault's support was on legal grounds, and he did not sign the petition, which expressed a more vehement condemnation of West Germany's totalitarianizing tendencies. The clash between Foucault's position and Deleuze's more extreme one seems to have been the principle ground for their falling-out. Their differing levels of tolerance for the state of Israel seems to have been another ground of contention. For more on this, see Didier Eribon, *Michel Foucault,* trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 258–62, and Macey, *Lives of Michel Foucault,* 392–97.

38. See Miller, *Passion of Michel Foucault,* 297–98. This text includes a letter from Deleuze to Miller in response to the question "What happened [between Deleuze and Foucault]?" Deleuze writes: "What kept me from calling him on the telephone? It is here that there arises a reason more profound and more essential than all the others. Rightly or wrongly, I believed that he desired a deeper solitude, for his thought. . . .

I now think that I should have tried to see him again, but I did not think to try, out of respect. I suffer still for not having seen him again, all the more so because I do not believe that there was any apparent reason" (298). Deleuze expresses a similar sentiment in "Fendre les choses," where he responds: "I felt that he wanted to be alone, to go to that place where one could not follow him, aside from several intimates. I needed him far more than he needed me" (83). ["J'ai eu l'impression qu'il voulait être seul, aller là où on ne pourrait pas le suivre, sauf quelques intimes. J'avais beaucoup plus besoin de lui que lui de moi" (115).] Deleuze's last written communication to Foucault was primarily a series of detailed notes on *Surveillir et punir* and *La Volonté de savoir,* many of which focus, interestingly enough, on the body, and which highlight the differences between Deleuze's use of "desire" and Foucault's use of "pleasure." See "Le Désir et le pouvoir," *Magazine littéraire* 325 (October 1994): 57–65.

39. Gilles Deleuze, with Claire Parnet, *Dialogues,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 11. ["Je peux parler de Foucault, raconter qu'il m'a dit ceci ou cela, détailer comme je le vois. Ce n'est rien, tant que je n'aurai pas su rencontrer réellement cet ensemble de sons martelés, de gestes décisifs, d'idées tout en bois sec et feu, d'attention extrême et de clôture soudaine, de rires et de sourires que l'on sent dangereux au moment même où l'on en éprouve la tendresse" (*Dialogues* [Paris: Flammarion, 1977], 17).] In "Un Portrait de Foucault," Claire Parnet questions Deleuze on this passage from *Dialogues* and asks if there is something "dangerous" in Foucault's thought. Deleuze responds, "Yes, because there is a violence about Foucault. He had a controlled, dominated, extreme violence, which became courage . . . . He was a man of passion, and he gave a very precise meaning to the word passion. His death cannot be thought except as a violent death, one that came to interrupt his work" (103). ["Oui, parce qu'il y une violence de Foucault. Il avait une extrême violence maitrisée, dominée, devenue courage . . . . C'est un homme de passion, et il donne au mot 'passion' un sens très précis. On ne peut penser sa mort que comme une mort violente, qui est venue interrompre son oeuvre" (140).] This study could be equally framed under a different rubric, "violence of work," which in many ways doubles or mirrors absence of work.

40. Walter Benjamin, "Franz Kafka: On the Tenth Anniversary of His Death," in *Illuminations,* trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 121.

41. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus,* trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 85–87. [*Mille plateaux* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1980), 109–11.]

42. Ibid., 88. ["Nul plus que Kafka n'a su dégager et faire fonctionner ensemble ces axes de l'agencement. D'une part la machine-bateau, la machine-hôtel, la machine-cirque, la machine-château, la machine-tribunal: chacune avec ses pièces, ses rouages, ses processus, ses corps emmêlés, emboîtés, déboîtés. . . . D'autre part le régime de signes ou d'énonciation: chaque régime avec ses transformations incorporelles, ses actes, ses sentences de mort et ses verdicts, ses procès, son 'droit' " (112).]

43. Ibid., 109. ["On assiste à une transformation des substances et à une dissolution des formes, passage à la limite ou fuite des contours, au profit des forces fluides, des flux, de l'air, de la lumière, de la matière qui font qu'un corps ou un mot ne s'arrêtent en aucun point précis. Puissance incorporelle de cette matière intense, puissance matérielle de cette langue. Une matière plus immédiate, plus fluide et ardente que les corps et les mots. . . . Les gestes et les choses, les voix et les sons, sont pris dans le même 'opéra,' emportés dans les effets changeants de bégaiement, de vibrato, de trémolo et de débordement" (138).]

44. Eribon notes that, when Deleuze and Foucault had stopped seeing each other, "[Foucault] spoke of Deleuze to his friends, particularly to Paul Veyne. He often said that Deleuze was 'the only philosophical mind' in France. And one of his fondest desires, shortly before his death, was to be reconciled with Deleuze" (*Michel Foucault,* 262).

45. Such a break is generally placed between the "literary" period (1962–67) and the more "archaeological," "historical," or "political" one (sometime between *L'Archéologie du savoir* in 1969 and *Surveillir et punir* in 1975). While such genealogies are indispensable, they can also unduly accentuate a logic of rupture that, while once again indispensable, can nonetheless serve to occlude an equally strong mechanism of repetition and continuity. For an interesting and very different exploration of this, see John Rajchman, *Michel Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), especially "The Ends of Modernism," 9–41.

46. François Ewald, "Foucault, Deleuze: Un Dialogue fécond et ininterrompu," *Magazine littéraire* 257 (September 1988) [special issue on Deleuze]: 48. This prefaces two short excerpts of their writings about each other, Foucault's introduction to Deleuze and Guattari's *L'Anti-*

Oedipe (49–50) and Deleuze's "Foucault, philosophe du devenir" (51–52), which was expanded into "Qu'est-ce qu'un dispositif?" in *Michel Foucault philosophe,* 185–95.

47. Deleuze, "La Vie comme oeuvre d'art" 132 [96]. ["Ceux qui ont rencontré Foucault, ce qui les frappait, c'était les yeux, la voix, et une stature droite entre les deux. Des éclairs et scintillements, des énoncés qui s'arrachaient aux mots, même le rire de Foucault était un énoncé. Et qu'il y ait disjonction entre le voir et le dire, que les deux soient séparés par un écart, une distance irréductible, signifie seulement ceci: on ne resoudra pas le problème de la connaissance (ou plutôt du 'savoir') en invoquant une correspondance, ni une conformité."]

48. See Didier Eribon, *Michel Foucault;* David Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault;* and James Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault,* all cited above. One cannot help but wonder how much the scandalous potential of Foucault's homosexuality helped spawn the biographical urge. For Miller it avowedly did (375). For a response to Miller, see the more recent autobiography by David M. Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). For a fictionalized account of the end of Foucault's life, see Hervé Guibert, *To the Friend Who Did Not Save My Life,* trans. Linda Coverdale (New York: Atheneum, 1991).

49. Deleuze, *Foucault,* 116. ["une chose hante Foucault, et c'est la pensée" (124).]

50. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), xx. ["ces deux recherches se sont spontanément rejointes, parce que *ces concepts d'une différence pure et d'une répétition complexe* semblaient en toutes occasions se réunir et se confondre" (*Différence et répétition* [Paris: P.U.F., 1968], 2).]

51. Gilles Deleuze, *Logique du sens* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1969); *The Logic of Sense,* trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

52. Michel Foucault, "Ariane s'est pendue," *Le Nouvel observateur* 229 (March 31–April 6, 1969): 36–37.

53. Michel Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum," *Critique* 282 (November 1970): 885–908; "Theatrum Philosophicum," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice,* trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 165–96.

54. Foucault, "Ariane s'est pendue," 37. ["La pensée au sommet de

son intensité sera elle-même différence et répétition: elle fera différer ce que la representation cherchait à rassembler; elle jouera l'indéfinie répétition dont la metaphysique entêtée cherchait l'origine."]

55. Ibid. ["Le livre de Deleuze, c'est le théâtre merveilleux ou se jouent, toujours nouvelles, ces différences que nous sommes, ces différences que nous faisons, ces différences entre lesquelles nous errons. De tous les livres qui sont écrits depuis bien longtemps, le plus singulier, le plus différent, et celui qui répète le mieux les différences qui nous traversent et nous dispersent. Théâtre de maintenant."] For more on Deleuze's thought as theater, see Constantin V. Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski, "Editor's Introduction," in *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 1–22. Thought as theater is also taken up in John Marks, "A New Image of Thought," *New Formations* 25 (Summer 1995): 66–76. This essay also considers the way in which Foucault and Deleuze ultimately formulate similar notions of space-time.

56. "Theatrum Philosophicum," 196. ["Une fulguration s'est produite qui portera le nom de Deleuze: une nouvelle pensée est possible; la pensée, de nouveau, est possible" (907).]

57. Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault,* 253.

58. Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum," 165. ["Longtemps, je crois, cette oeuvre tournera au-dessus de nos têtes, en resonance enigmatique avec celle de Klossovski, autre signe majeur et excessif. Mais un jour, peut-être, le siècle sera deleuzien" (885).]

59. The centrality of Klossowski to this essay, and to Foucault's earlier writings, has not been given sufficient attention. Klossowski considered Foucault his greatest reader and bestowed on him the exclusive honor of reading the manuscript version of *Le Baphomet,* which he then dedicated to Foucault. Foucault's essay on *Le Baphomet,* "La Prose d'Actéon," is similar in tone, if not in content, to "Theatrum Philosophicum" and engages in a parallel mode of high encomium. See "La Prose d'Actéon," *La Nouvelle Revue française* 135 (1964): 444–49; "The Prose of Actaeon," introductory essay to the English version of *The Baphomet,* trans. Sophie Hawkes and Stephen Sartarelli (New York: Marsilio Publishers, 1992), xix–xxxviii; also reprinted in *Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954–1984: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology,* vol. 2, ed. James D. Faubion (New York: New Press, 1998).

60. Deleuze, "Fendre les choses, fendre les mots," 122 [88–89]. ["Je ne sais pas ce que voulait dire Foucault, je ne lui ai jamais demandé. Il avait un humour diabolique. Peut-être voulait-il dire ceci: que j'était

[*sic?*] le plus naif parmi les philosophes de notre génération. Chez nous tous, on trouve des thèmes comme la multiplicité, la différence, la répétition. Mais j'en propose des concepts presque bruts, tandis que les autres travaillent avec plus de médiations. . . . C'est peut-être cela que voulait dire Foucault: je n'étais pas le meilleur, mais le plus naif, une sorte d'art brut, si l'on peut dire; pas le plus profond, mais le plus innocent."]

61. See Jean Baudrillard, *Forget Foucault,* trans. Nicole Dufresne (New York: Semiotext(e), 1987), where he writes, in a not entirely laudatory tone, "This collusion [of Deleuze's notion of 'desire' and Foucault's notion of 'power'] is too beautiful not to arouse suspicion, but it has in its behalf the quaint innocence of a betrothal. When power blends into desire and desire blends into power, let's forget them both" (19).

62. Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum," 191. ["qu'est-ce qu'on va penser de nous?" (904).] For an extended analysis of this footnote and the role of the footnote in general, see chapter 6 on Klossowski and Bataille.

63. Jacques Derrida, "La Parole soufflée," in *Writing and Difference,* trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 193. Also in this volume is Derrida's famous essay on Foucault's *Histoire de la folie,* "Cogito and the History of Madness," 31–63. See also Foucault's response to Derrida in "Mon corps, ce papier, ce feu," printed as appendix II to the 1972 edition of *Histoire de la folie.* Interesting commentaries on this exchange include Edward Said, "The Problem of Textuality: Two Exemplary Positions," *Critical Inquiry* 4 (Summer 1978): 673–714; and Shoshana Felman, "Foucault/Derrida: The Madness of the Thinking/Speaking Subject," in *Writing and Madness,* trans. Martha Noel Evans and Shoshana Felman (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 35–55. In the same book, see also "Madness and the Literary: Toward the Question of the Book" (251–55), where Felman writes of madness as "a kind of *rhythm* . . . a rhythm that is unpredictable, incalculable, unsayable, but that is nonetheless fundamentally narratable as the story of the slippage of a reading *between* the excessive fullness and the excessive emptiness of meaning" (254).

64. For all the complexities of the term *désoeuvré*, see Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community,* trans. Peter Connor et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991) as well as Maurice Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community,* trans. Pierre Joris (Barrytown, N.Y.: Station Hill Press, 1988). In *The Infinite Conversation,* Blanchot writes that " 'madness' is the absence of work, while the artist is one who is pre-

eminently destined to a work—but also one whose concern for the work engages him in the experience of that which in advance always ruins the work and always draws it into the empty depths of worklessness, where nothing is ever made of being" (200).

65. Blanchot, *The Infinite Conversation,* 420. For more on work, unworking, and the absence of work in Blanchot, see Paul Davies, "The Work and the Absence of the Work," 91–107; Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumier, "On Unworking: The Image in Writing According to Blanchot," 138–52; and Gillian Rose, "Potter's Field: Death Worked and Unworked," 190–208; all in *Maurice Blanchot: The Demand of Writing,* ed. Carolyn Bailey Gill (London and New York: Routledge, 1996). On the impersonal in Deleuze and its links to Blanchot, see René Schérer, "*Homo tantum.* L'impersonnel: Une Politique," in *Gilles Deleuze: Une Vie philosophique,* ed. Eric Alliez (Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo, 1998), 25–42.

66. Boutang, *Louis Althusser,* 453. ["Jacques Martin est pour ces deux esprits supérieurs, fragiles à l'epoque, chacun dans un genre différent, que sont Michel Foucault et Louis Althusser, l'ombre de l'échec, le miroir de ce qu'ils auraient pu devenir. Le mythique philosophe 'sans oeuvre' dont l'un et l'autre se sont fait un étendard, et parfois un paravent, c'est Jacques Martin."]

Five Bodies, Sickness, and Disjunction

1. Cited in Robert Fleck, "Pierre Klossowski: Simulacrum, Incident, Stereotype," *Flash Art* 156 (1991): 101. ["C'est le plus grand livre de philosophie que j'ai lu, avec Nietzsche lui-même," in *Cahier pour un temps/Pierre Klossowski* (Paris: Editions du Centre Pompidou, 1985), 85, replica of handwritten letter from Foucault to Klossowski, June 3, 1969.]

2. See Alain Arnaud, *Pierre Klossowski* (Paris: Seuil, 1990), 190. Moreover, Klossowski gave Foucault alone a copy of this novel when it was in draft form. See also Foucault's encomium to Klossowski, "La Prose d'Actéon," which is very much in the vein of "Theatrum Philosophicum."

3. Deleuze figures minimally, if at all, in the various monographs on Klossowski and published interviews with him. See, for example, Jean-Maurice Monnoyer, *Le Peintre et son démon: Entretiens avec Pierre Klossowski* (Paris: Flammarion, 1985), 158; Arnaud, *Pierre Klossowski,* 136–47; Anne-Marie Lugan-Dardigna, *Klossowski: L'Homme aux simulacres* (Paris: Navarin Editeur, 1986), 105.

4. Gilles Deleuze, "Pierre Klossowski ou le corps langage," *Critique* 214 (March 1965), 199–219, reprinted in *Logique du sens* (Paris: Minuit, 1969); *The Logic of Sense,* trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); and Deleuze and Guattari, "La Synthèse disjonctive," *L'Arc* 43 (1970): 54–62. Pierre Klossowski, "Digression à partir d'un portrait apocryphe" and "Roberte et Gulliver," in *L'Arc* 49 (1972), 11–14 and 15–22, issue on Gilles Deleuze, the latter reprinted in Klossowski, *Les Derniers Travaux de Gulliver* (Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1974).

5. Michel Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum," 196. ["Dans la guérite du Luxembourg, Duns Scot passe la tête par la lunette circulaire; il porte des moustaches considérables; ce sont celles de Nietzsche, déguisé en Klossovski" (909).]

6. Pierre Klossowski, "Digressions à partir d'un portrait apocryphe," 11. ["Sans doute Deleuze se trouva-t-il aussi favorisé par ses affinités mêmes avec un autre esprit exemplaire dont les explorations dégagèrent des zones mitoyennes à la sienne propre: Michel Foucault. Tous deux ont en commun sous tous les rapports: la liquidation du principe d'identité."]

7. Pierre Klossowski, *Les Lois de l'hospitalité* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965).

8. Pierre Klossowski, *Roberte Ce Soir* and *The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes,* trans. Austryn Wainhouse (New York: Marion Boyars, 1989), 148. ["la femme la plus en vue du parti radical," *Les Lois de l'hospitalité* (51).]

9. Pierre Klossowski, *Roberte Ce Soir,* 12–13. ["Le maître de céans . . . attend avec anxiété sur le seuil de sa maison l'étranger qu'il verra poindre à l'horizon. . . . Car le maître de céans recherche avec l'étranger qu'il reçoit une relation non plus accidentelle, mais essentielle. L'un et l'autre ne sont d'abord que des substances isolées, sans communication l'une avec l'autre, qui ne soit toujours qu'accidentelle. . . . Mais parce que le maître ce céans invite ici l'étranger à remonter à la source de toutes substances au delà de tout accident, voici comment il inaugure une relation substantielle entre lui et l'étranger, qui en verité sera un rapport non plus relatif, mais absolu, comme si, le maître étant confondu avec l'étranger, sa relation avec toi qui viens d'entrer n'étant plus qu'une relation de soi à soi-même" (*Les Lois de l'hospitalité,* 110).]

10. Klossowski, *Roberte Ce Soir,* 53. ["Votre grand tort à nos yeux, Madame, c'est que vous servez deux maîtres parce que vous ne croyez à l'un qu'autant qu'il vous est utile de desservir l'autre, ne croyant à la vérité d'aucun des deux. Par rapport à nous, vous prétendez soutenir la

frauduleuse doctrine de la double substance. Sommes-nous les pensées indésirables de votre esprit, vous nous opposez le mutisme d'une chair à soustraire à nos opérations; à la soustraire pourquoi, je vous prie, puisque en l'opposant à vos pensées, ce soir, qui ne sont ailleurs que dans votre esprit, c'est de votre esprit même que vous séparez cette chair; dès lors que faites-vous de son intégrité si elle ne la trouve point dans le principe de la résurrection des corps? Mais en interdisant à vos poètes, à vos artistes, à vos acteurs de décrire, de peindre et surtout de jouer ce que nous opérons sur vous à l'instant, vous leur imposez le mutisme de la chair intègre comme si elle était déjà le pur silence des esprits. Ainsi par rapport à ces substances composées, à ces doubles natures qui usent de la parole pour dénoncer leur propre duplicité, vous avez le front d'agir en substance simple, celle des esprits qui, faute d'une chair passible comme on dit, ne sauraient se racheter et subsistent vaillamment dans la mort spirituelle, la nôtre que vous reniez à l'instant que vous nous opposez l'apparence d'une chair comme si elle pouvait renaître incorruptible. Seriez-vous donc d'accord avec nous qui réfutons ce soi-disant mystère comme une atteinte à notre dignité? Il n'en est rien. Car si le pur silence d'une substance simple est dû à l'absence d'une chair qui parle, vous confondez grossièrement avec ce silence le mutisme d'une chair vivante" (*Les Lois de l'hospitalité,* 141–42).]

11. This is comparable to the opposition between chatter and silence staged in the reading of Louis-René des Forêts's *Le Bavard* in chapter 2. According to this logic, chatter would be a way to maintain oppositionally a pure silence.

12. Klossowski's depiction of women is of importance with regard to another of Klossowski's works, *La Monnaie vivante* (Paris: Eric Losfeld, 1970), photographs by Pierre Zucca, which will be taken up at length in chapter 6. *La Monnaie vivante,* part treatise on economics and part semi-pornographic photography, has encountered resistance not only due to its unorthodox treatment of economics but also due to the unusual nature of the photographs, which depict Klossowski's wife, Denise Morin-Sinclaire, in a series of "tableaux vivants," or staged stills. A recent edition of *La Monnaie vivante,* is printed without the photographs (Paris: Joelle Losfeld, 1993).

13. Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes Toward a Political Economy of Sex," in *Toward an Anthropology of Women,* ed. Rayna Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), 174. For a different formulation of the woman as a catalyst or enabler of male homosocial relations,

see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), especially 1–27.

14. Not surprisingly, very little explicitly feminist work has been done on Klossowski, with the exception of Anne-Marie Lugan-Dardigna's *Klossowski: L'Homme aux simulacres* (Paris: Navarin Editeur, 1986). There is, however, exciting feminist work on Klossowski currently in progress. My thinking about Klossowski as well as other aspects of this project is indebted to conversations with Tracy McNulty, as well as to her unpublished essays "The Subject Dissolved: Pierre Klossowski's *Laws of Hospitality*" and "Acting Passive / Enacting Passion: Hospitality After the Death of God," which explicitly examine the role of the hostess in Klossowski's fiction.

15. Gayle S. Rubin, "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality," in *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader,* ed. Henry Abelove, Michèle Aina Barale, David M. Halperin (New York: Routledge, 1993), 13–14. For an interview with Rubin in which she compares the two essays, see Gayle Rubin with Judith Butler, "Sexual Traffic," *Differences* 6 (Summer-Fall 1994): 62–99.

16. Since the publication of *Nietzsche et le circle vicieux* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1969) [*Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle,* trans. Daniel W. Smith (London: Athlone Press; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997)], Klossowski has devoted himself exclusively to painting, and he continues to paint in his Paris studio. There have been numerous exhibitions of his artwork. For a complete listing, see the bibliography in Arnaud, *Pierre Klossowski,* 209. Klossowski comes from a notably literary and artistic family. His younger brother Balthazar is the celebrated artist Balthus (for a brief overview of Balthus's life and work, see Ted Morgan, "Balthus," *Observer Magazine* [30 January 1994]: 36–41). As a young man, Klossowski was well acquainted with Rainer Maria Rilke and served for a time as Andre Gide's secretary.

17. Lynn Hunt, "Pornography and the French Revolution," in *The Invention of Pornography: Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity, 1500–1800* (New York: Zone Books, 1993), 301–7. Hunt notes that "in the early years of the Revolution, politically motivated pornography accounted for about half of the obscene literature produced, and it portrayed aristocrats as impotent, riddled with venereal disease and given over to debauchery. . . . The central figure in such attacks was Queen Marie Antoinette herself" (307).

18. Ibid., 330.

19. Kathryn Norberg, "The Libertine Whore: Prostitution in French Pornography from Margot to Juliette," in *The Invention of Pornography,* 227.

20. Klossowski, *The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes,* 125–26. ["Oui, mon Octave, nous sommes naturellement athées; et peut-être la progression de l'athéisme dans le monde contemporain trouve-t-elle ici sa véritable source: l'importance accrue de notre intervention, de notre expansion dans la vie de nos jours. Et cependant notre refus primitif de *croire* est aussi différent de celui de l'homme sciemment et résolument athée que l'esprit prévenu de ce dernier l'est de la foi d'une bonne soeur. J'irai plus loin: ma propre cousine, convertie à la religion romaine, aujourd'hui religieuse ursuline, est plus proche de moi par son attitude que mon amie Sarah, matérialiste acharnée. Le sentiment de son corps, auquel la femme est plus intimement inhérente que l'homme, fait aussi qu'elle atteint plus sûrement à la mort des sens que l'ascète; plus de corps, plus d'âme; la mort parfaite; néant avec lequel nous avons cependant un rapport presque doux, et tendre; notre néant est aussi *chaud* que notre corps; le 'sang-froid' n'est que vanité virile" (*Les Lois de l'hospitalité,* 35).]

21. Ibid., 133–34 [40–41].

22. Jane Gallop, *Intersections: A Reading of Sade with Bataille, Blanchot, and Klossowski* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), 105–6.

23. Klossowski translated Nietzsche's *The Gay Science* into French: Friedrich Nietzsche, "*Le Gai savoir" et* "*Fragments posthumes, 1880–1882*" (Paris: Club français du Livre, 1954).

24. Jacques Derrida, *Eperons: Les Styles de Nietzsche* (Paris: Flammarion, 1978), 54. ["à travers l'éloge de la simulation . . . *Le Gai savoir* range parmi les artistes, qui sont toujours des experts en simulation, les Juifs et les femmes. L'association du Juif et de la femme n'est probablement pas insignifiante. Nietzsche les traite souvent en parallèle, ce qui nous renverrait peut-être encore au motif de la castration et du simulacre."]

25. The *simulacrum* is one of Klossowski's most important concepts. For a detailed analysis of this concept and its relation to the phantasm, see *La Monnaie vivante* and the discussion of it in the next chapter.

26. Jeffrey Mehlman, "Literature and Hospitality: Klossowski's Hamann," in *Studies in Romanticism* 22 (Summer 1983): 329–32, 339–40.

27. Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle,* 19. ["bien qu'écrire soit pour moi parmi les fruits rigoreusement défendus, vous que je

vénère telle une soeur plus âgée, il faut que vous receviez tout de même une lettre de moi—et sans doute sera-t-elle la dernière!" (43)]

28. Mehlman, "Literature and Hospitality," 345.

29. For a detailed discussion of the figure of the child in Klossowski, especially the adolescent page Ogier in *Le Baphomet,* see Alain Jouffroy's series of interviews with Klossowski, *Le Secret Pouvoir du sens* (Paris: Ecriture, 1994), especially 23–68. Klossowski's Ogier is oddly comparable to the figure of the Jewish child in Michel Tournier's *Le Roi des Aulnes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970). For Deleuze's analysis of Tournier's *Vendredi, ou, les limbes du pacifique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), see "Michel Tournier et le monde sans autrui," *Logique du sens,* appendix 4.

30. To my mind, this is what makes Klossowski's fiction distinct from, and superior to, that of Bataille. While Bataille also traffics in the depiction of acts that are transgressive of established religious and sexual mores, one is left with the impression that Bataille's whole purpose is to convey transgression as such. This is the case, for example, in Bataille's short novel *The Story of the Eye.* Klossowski, however, goes far beyond this. For him, the transgressive act— one that, as with Bataille, generally involves the body—is always put in conjunction with something else and works, not just for its shock value, but to serve as a conduit to total perspectival reorientation. For Klossowski, transgression is a means to an end, a means to radically reformulating the official laws that are operative in a given system. Ultimately, bodily transgression leads beyond the body to a space where the body and the mind, indeed individual identities as such, are no longer discrete entities. It is one of the great misfortunes of canonization that Bataille is worshipped by so many French and Anglophone readers, whereas Klossowski is virtually unknown. To my mind, Bataille is interesting primarily because Blanchot, Foucault, and Klossowski found him so interesting; in other words, he is interesting for what he enabled. Of the points of nonconnection between the thinkers in question here, the strongest is between Deleuze and Bataille. In a rare acerbic moment, Deleuze writes in *Dialogues* that "the little secret is generally reducible to a sad narcissistic and pious masturbation. . . . Georges Bataille is a very French author. He made the little secret the essence of literature, with a mother within, a priest beneath, an eye above" (Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam [New York: Columbia University Press, 1987], 47).

31. For an essay that takes up this theme, see Ann Smock, "Far From the Old Folks at Home: Klossowski's *Les Lois de l'hospitalité,*" in *Double*

Dealing (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985). Smock briefly considers the question of "revocation" (75–76), and her footnotes give considerable attention to Deleuze's writings on Klossowski (see especially notes 4–9, pp. 131–34). I have treated sickness in Klossowski's reading of Nietzsche and its relation to mind-body dualism in "Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Mind," in *Deleuze and Feminist Theory,* ed. Ian Buchanan and Claire Colebrook (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 128–43.

32. Klossowski, *Nietzsche,* 16. ["Il peut sembler absurde de donner les textes successifs de Nietzsche comme autant de '*céphalalgies*' inversées en paroles: toutefois, la manière dont Nietsche s'astreint à décrire les diverses phases des états conscients ne saurait éviter le mécanisme d'une telle inversion" (39–40).]

33. See Daniel W. Smith, "Translator's Preface," in *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle,* ix.

34. It is interesting to consider another analysis where pain is integrally related to mental states. Such is the account provided of pain and its relation to imagining in Elaine Scarry's *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). Scarry focuses primarily on pain resulting from war or torture, which arguably has a very different attendant psychic structure than sickness-induced pain. Nonetheless, what I find striking about Scarry's account is the way pain and imagining operate according to the same logic, albeit in a somewhat different fashion. She writes, for example, that "pain and imagining are the 'framing events' within whose boundaries all other perceptual, somatic, and emotional events occur; thus, between the two extremes can be mapped the whole terrain of the human psyche" (165).

35. Cited in Klossowski, *Nietzsche,* 20. ["Mon existence est un *effrayant fardeau:* je l'aurais rejetée depuis longtemps, si je n'avais fait les expérimentations les plus instructives dans le domaine intellectuel et moral, précisément durant cet état de souffrance et de presque absolu renoncement—cette joyeuse humeur, avide de connaître, m'élève à des hauteurs où je triomphe de toute torture et de tout désespoir. Dans l'ensemble, je suis plus heureux que je ne l'ai jamais été de ma vie. Une constante douleur, une sensation toute proche du mal de mer, des heures durant, une demi-paralysie qui me rend la parole difficile, alternant avec de furieux accès (le dernier me fit vomir pendant trois jours et trois nuits, je languissais après la mort!) . . . Ma consolation, ce sont mes pensées et mes perspectives" (44).]

36. Ibid., 23. ["L'acte de penser devient identique à souffrir et souffrir à penser. De ce fait, Nietzsche en vient à la *coïncidence de la pensée et de la souffrance* et à ce que serait une pensée dépourvue de souffrance. Ensuite, penser la souffrance, réfléchir sur la souffrance révolue—en tant qu'*impossibilité de penser*—est ressenti comme la plus haute jouissance" (47–48).]

37. Ibid., 24–25. ["Cette concurrence dissolvante des forces somatiques et spirituelles, Nietzsche l'éprouve longuement et la surveille passionnément: plus il écoute le corps, plus il se méfie de la *personne que le corps supporte.* Les hantises de suicide, dans le désepoir de jamais guérir de ses atroces migraines, revenaient à réprouver le corps au nom de la personne qui s'y trouve diminuée. . . . à force d'en étudier les réactions il se conçoit *autre* qu'on ne l'avait précédemment connu, tel qu'on ne le connaîtra peut-être jamais: de la sorte il élabore une intelligence qu'il veut exclusivement soumise à des critères physiques. La souffrance, non seulement il l'interprète comme énergie, il la veut telle: la souffrance physique n'est vivable qu'en tant qu'elle est étroitement liée à la jouissance, en tant qu'elle développe une lucidité voluptueuse: ou bien elle éteint toute pensée possible, ou bien elle atteint au délire de la pensée" (51).]

38. Ibid., 30. ["il lutte à la fois avec les impulsions qui vont et viennent et pour une *cohésion nouvelle* de sa pensée avec le corps en tant que pensée *corporante*" (56).]

39. For more on Deleuze's concept of becoming, see especially Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983); *L'Anti-Oedipe: Capitalisme et schizophrénie* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1972).

40. Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la philosophie* (Paris: P.U.F., 1962); *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983). Although there is considerable overlap at the level of the actual argument, especially if Deleuze's "forces" are replaced by a more Klossowskian system of pulsional energetics, the two studies of Nietzsche are based in very different contexts. Whereas Klossowski devotes much of his study to an analysis of Nietzsche's personal letters (albeit in such an impersonal fashion that it does not even approximate the domain of biography), Deleuze's study has a much more philosophical grounding, whereby Nietzsche is discussed through the lens of Kant and, to a lesser degree, Hegel. For a detailed analysis of Deleuze's relation to

his philosophical predecessors, see Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 26–55.

41. Klossowski, *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux,* 49–50. ["*Nous n'avons pas de langage pour exprimer ce qui est en devenir*—dit Nietzsche. Toute pensée résulte toujours du rapport momentané de puissance des impulsions entre elles et principalement de celle qui prédomine autant que de celles qui résistent" (80).] It is interesting to note, in light of the discussion of "gesture" in the previous chapter, that just before this passage, Klossowski evokes the gestural in a style comparable to Deleuze and Benjamin.

42. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* 66. ["Nietzsche appelle force active celle qui va jusqu'au bout de ses conséquences; une force active, séparée de ce qu'elle peut par la force réactive elle-même, est-ce qu'elle ne va pas jusqu'au bout de ce qu'elle peut, à sa manière? . . . Il est certain qu'une force réactive peut être considérée de points de vue différents. La maladie, par exemple, me sépare de ce que je peux: force réactive, elle me rend réactif, elle rétrécit mes possibilités et me comdamne à un milieu amoindri auquel je ne peux plus que m'adapter. Mais, d'une autre manière, elle me révèle une nouvelle puissance, elle me dote d'une nouvelle volonté que je peux faire mienne, allant jusqu'au bout d'un étrange pouvoir. . . . On reconnaît une ambivalence chère à Nietzsche: toutes les forces dont il dénonce le caractère réactif, il avoue quelques pages ou quelques lignes plus loin qu'elles le fascinent, qu'elles sont sublimes par le point de vue qu'elles nous ouvrent et par l'inquiétante volonté de puissance dont elles témoignent" (74–75).]

43. Such a pronouncement is all the more interesting in light of Deleuze's own subsequent period of long convalescence and sickness before his death in 1995. One need only cite one of his later works—such as *Critique et clinique* (1993)—as a testament to the lucidity of thought produced under conditions of extreme physical hardship.

44. Deleuze goes so far as to assert that "Klossowski's entire work moves toward a single goal: to assure the loss of personal identity and to dissolve the self. This is the shining trophy that Klossowski's characters bring back from a voyage to the edge of madness" ("Klossowski or Bodies-Language," 283). ["Toute l'oeuvre de Klossowski tend vers un but unique: assurer la perte de l'identité personnelle, dissoudre le moi, c'est le splendide trophée que les personnages de Klossowski rapportent d'un voyage au bord de la folie" ("Klossowski ou les corps-langage," 329).]

45. Ibid., 291. ["Klossowski veut-il dire seulement que, en parler, nous évite de penser à de vilaines choses? Non: de même que le langage pur qui fait un silence impur est une *provocation* de l'esprit par le corps, le langage impur qui fait le silence pur est une *révocation* du corps par l'esprit . . . . Plus précisément, qu'est-ce qui est révoqué dans le corps? Klossowski répond que c'est l'integrité du corps; et que, par là, l'identité de la personne est comme suspendue, volatilisée" (338).]

46. It is interesting to compare the term *revocation* to Klossowski's use of *vocation* in his early novel *La Vocation suspendue* (Paris: Gallimard, 1950), which describes a man who falls away from his calling as a priest (an event that parallels Klossowski's own life). In my reading, *revocation* and *suspended vocation* are virtually identical and include both hailing and revoking.

47. Deleuze, "Klossowski or Bodies-Language," 289. ["Déjà le couple Octave-Roberte renvoie à une pure différence d'intensité dans la pensée; les noms d'Octave et de Roberte ont cessé de désigner des choses pour exprimer des intensités pures, hausses et chutes" ("Klossowski ou les corps-langage" (335).]

48. In their discussion of the disjunctive synthesis, Deleuze and Guattari write that "a disjunction that remains disjunctive and that still affirms the disjointed terms, that affirms them throughout their entire distance, *without restricting one by the other or excluding the other from the one,* is perhaps the greatest paradox" (*Anti-Oedipus,* 76). ["Une disjonction qui reste disjonctive, et qui pourtant affirme les termes disjoints, les affirme à travers toute leur distance, *sans limiter l'un par l'autre ni exclure l'autre de l'un,* c'est peut-être le plus haut paradoxe" (*L'Anti-Oedipe,* 90).]

49. Ibid. ["un usage exclusif, limitatif, négatif, de la synthèse disjonctive."]

50. A preeminently theatrical gesture of opposition is the solecism, which Octave discusses at length with respect to his private art collection in the opening pages of *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes.* He quotes Quintilian, who writes in the *Institutio Oratoria* that "some think there is solecism in gesture too, whenever by a nod of the head or a movement of the hand one utters the opposite of what the voice is saying" (97). ["Certains pensent qu'il y a solécisme dans le geste également, toutes les fois que par un mouvement de la tête ou de la main on fait entendre le contraire de ce que l'on dit" (*Les Lois de l'hospitalité,* 14).] In Octave's commentaries on the work of the (nonexistent) painter Tonnerre, he is particularly attentive to solecism involving the hands, as is Klossowski in

his description of Roberte's erotic encounters. In Klossowski, the hands are the erotic emblems *par excellence* and the supreme locus of the gesture.

51. Deleuze, "Klossowski or Bodies-Language," 296–97. ["le syllogisme disjonctif accède à un principe et à un usage diaboliques, la disjonction est affirmée pour elle-même sans cesser d'être une disjonction, la divergence ou la différence deviennent objets d'affirmation pure, le *ou bien* devient puissance d'affirmer, hors des conditions dans le concept de l'identité d'un Dieu, d'un monde ou d'un moi. Le dilemme et le solécisme acquièrent comme tels une positivité supérieure. . . . Mais précisément c'est dans l'ordre de Dieu, et seulement dans cet ordre, que les disjonctions ont valeur négative d'exclusion. Et c'est de l'autre côté, dans l'ordre de l'Antéchrist, que la disjonction (la différence, la divergence, le décentrement) devient en tant que telle puissance affirmative et affirmée" ("Klossowski ou les corps-langage," 344).]

52. Such an analysis merits a detailed consideration of Klossowski's novel *The Baphomet,* in which the soul of Saint Theresa instigates a massive spirit rebellion whereby many souls, or pure breaths, simultaneously "insufflate" a single body. See Deleuze's comments on *The Baphomet* in "Klossowski or Bodies-Language," 291–94; "Klossowski ou le corps-langage," 338–42; and in *Anti-Oedipus,* 77; *L'Anti-Oedipe,* 92.

Six Objects, Reserve, and the General Economy

1. Jean-François Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy,* trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

2. Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death,* trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (London: Sage Publications, 1993); and Jean-Joseph Goux, *Symbolic Economies: After Marx and Freud,* trans. Jennifer Curtiss Gage (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

3. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983).

4. Pierre Klossowski, *La Monnaie vivante*, photography by Pierre Zucca (Paris: Losfeld, 1970), not paginated. All translations are from this edition and page numbers are indicated in parentheses. [Reprinted without photos in Pierre Klossowski, *La Monnaie vivante* (Paris: Joelle Losfeld, 1994).]

5. The English translation of this term, "drive," seems inadequate to

convey the nuances of the French word *pulsion,* so I have chosen to retain the French.

6. Klossowski, *La Monnaie vivante* (88), translated in Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy,* 86–87. ["Que l'on imagine un instant une régression apparemment impossible: soit une phase industrielle où les producteurs ont le moyen d'exiger, à titre de paiement, des objets de sensation de la part des consommateurs. Ces objets sont des êtres vivants. Selon cet exemple du troc, producteurs et consommateurs en viennent à constituer des collections de 'personnes' destinées prétendument au plaisir, à l'émotion, à la sensation. Comment la 'personne' humaine peut-elle remplir la fonction de monnaie? . . . Ce que nous disons là existe en fait. Car sans recourir à un troc littéral, toute l'industrie moderne repose sur un troc médiatisé par le signe de la monnaie inerte, neutralisant la nature des objets échangés, soit sur un simulacre du troc—simulacre qui réside sous la forme des ressources en main-d'oeuvre, donc d'une monnaie vivante, inavouée en tant que telle, déjà existante."]

7. Klossowski, *La Monnaie vivante* (93). ["La présence corporelle est déjà marchandise, indépendamment et *en plus* de la marchandise que cette présence contribue à produire."]

8. Klossowski, *La Monnaie vivante* (74). ["abolir la propriété du corps".]

9. Lyotard writes in *Libidinal Economy* that "just as it is then necessary, if we maintain the *analogy* suggested in *La Monnaie vivante* between the phantasmatic and production, to conceive the latter under the same category as perpetual metamorphosis, so we will conclude that there are no more *objects* or *subjects* in the perpetual transformation of libidinal energies than there are in all possible energies in the heart of the so-called production process in the wider sense" (72). ["Et de même qu'il faut alors, si l'on maintient l'*analogie* suggérée dans *La Monnaie vivante* entre la fantasmatique et la production, concevoir celle-là au même titre que celle-ci comme perpétuelle métamorphose, de même on conclura qu'il n'y a pas plus d'*objets* et de *sujets* dans la transformation perpétuelle des énergies libidinales, qu'il y en a dans celle de toutes énergies possibles au sein du procès dit de production au sens large" (91).]

10. Ibid., 77. ["Il y a à part des phantasmes et non moins réelles qu'eux (jamais Klossowski ne doute du réel) des transcriptions parlées, plastiques ou écrites de ces phantasmes, il y a des choses artistes qui *valent pour* des phantasmes inéchangeables. Or voici quelle est la relation

d'*exclusion* que Klossowski admet entre l'objet de la volupté et son simulacre: 'Si le phantasme est dans chacun ce qui en fait un cas singulier—pour se défendre contre la signification *institutionnelle* que lui donne le group grégaire, le cas singulier ne peut pas ne pas recourir au simalacre: soit un *valant pour* son phantasme—autant que pour un échange frauduleux entre le *cas singulier* et la généralité *grégaire*. . . . Le cas singulier *disparaît* comme tel dès qu'il *signifie* ce qu'il *est pour soi;* il n'y a dans l'individu que son *cas d'espèce* qui lui assure son intelligibilité. Non seulement il *disparaît* en tant que tel dès qu'il se formule à lui-même son phantasme: car il ne le peut jamais que par les *signes institués*—mais il ne se reconstitue par ces signes que s'excluant du même coup de se qui *devient* en lui *intelligible,* échangeable.'

Le simulacre, parce qu'il est communicable (serait-il destiné à communiquer l'intransmissible du phantasme), introduit l'échangeabilité: ainsi il est monnaie, signe, il *vaut pour autre chose* que ses matériau et agencement propres, et il est voué à la circulation" (96).]

11. Klossowski, *La Monnaie vivante* (61) ["simulacre simulé"]. For an exceptional analysis of the workings of the simulacrum with respect to Klossowski's fiction, see Scott Durham, *Phantom Communities: The Simulacrum and the Limits of Postmodernism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 26–46, 76–114. For a discussion of the Klossowskian simulacrum with respect to Nietzsche and a different set of novels, see Jean Decottignies, *Pierre Klossowski: Biographie d'un monomane* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 1997), 189–94.

12. Alain Arnaud, *Pierre Klossowski* (Paris: Seuil, 1990), 122. ["C'est ainsi que dans la sphère industrielle soumise en principe aux lois de la rentabilité existe une part de gratuité, celle de l'expérimentation gaspilleuse; et qu'à l'inverse la vie impulsionnelle peut revêtir des aspects mercantiles, être l'objet d'un négoce. Les objets les plus ustensilaires peuvent être investis d'une émotion, susciter des phantasmes, une volupté. Et les pulsions les plus singulières et les plus libres être rabattues dans un ordre qui les interprète en termes d'utilité et de rentabilité. Klossowski a souvent illustré cette ambiguïté. Il a su jouer d'un circuit sur l'autre, usant des phantasmes comme d'une monnaie, investissant les objets les plus commerciaux d'une charge émotive et symbolique, pervertissant l'économie des besoins et des usages par celle de la gratuité et de l'inutilité."]

13. Klossowski, *La Monnaie vivante* (28), translated in Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy,* 93. ["un rapport purement analogique . . . ne mène à rien, si ce n'est pas du point du vue des *objects* et des *besoins* que l'on part

pour déceler la lutte des affects contre *leur formulation inadéquate,* reconvertie *matériellement à l'état d'une demande de biens* qui ne leur correspond que de façon contrariante."]

14. Ibid. (77, 84) ["le signe de *ce qui n'existe pas*"; "*elle n'est en elle-même rien qu'un phantasme qui répond à un phantasme*"].

15. The complex excesses of money have been preeminently articulated by Marx himself. See especially "Money, or the Circulation of Commodities," in *Capital, Volume One,* trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Vintage Books, 1977). See also Goux's "Numismatics: An Essay in Theoretical Numismatics," in *Symbolic Economies,* 9–63.

16. Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy,* 78–79. ["La fraude est ici que sous prétexte de rendre communicable le phantasme et de le traduire en signes et en syntaxe, ce sont ces figures de langage qui viennent à leur tour recevoir charge libidinale. . . . Les signes que la plume trace sur le papier ne sont pas seulement des moyens de communiquer une émotion qui leur est extérieure, et qui serait pour ainsi dire perdue du fait même qu'elle est écrite . . . , mais ces signes d'écriture étant simultanément, par eux-mêmes, non pas en dépit, mais en raison et à proportion de leur rigidité et invariance, des produits de consommation phantasmatique" (98).]

17. Michel Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews,* trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 191. ["Qu-est-ce qu'on va penser de nous?" ("Theatrum Philosophicum," *Critique* 292 [November 1970]: 904).]

18. See the analysis of this episode in the previous chapter.

19. Some analyses of Bataillean economics include: Jacques Derrida, "From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism without Reserve," in *Writing and Difference,* trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 251–77; Jean-Joseph Goux, "General Economics and Postmodern Capitalism," in *Yale French Studies* 78 (1990): 206–24; Jean-François Lyotard, "The Desire Named Marx," in *Libidinal Economy,* 95–154; Steven Shaviro, "Reckless Calculations: Bataille and the Political Economy of Expenditure," in *Passion and Excess: Blanchot, Bataille and Literary Theory* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1990), 35–62; Rebecca Comay, "Gifts Without Presents: Economies of 'Experience' in Bataille and Heidegger," *Yale French Studies* 78 (1990): 66–89; Stephen W. Melville, *Philosophy Beside Itself: On Deconstruction and Modernism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 71–83;

Joseph Libertson, "Separation and the General Economy" and "Alterity in the General Economy: Parole," in *Proximity: Levinas, Blanchot, Bataille, and Communication* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), 9–55 and 274–96; Michèle H. Richman, *Reading Georges Bataille: Beyond the Gift* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982); and Arkady Plotnitsky, *Reconfigurations: Critical Theory and General Economy* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993).

20. Georges Bataille, "The Notion of Expenditure," in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927–1929,* ed. and trans. Allan Stoekl (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 123. ["*un besoin de perte démesurée* qui existe à l'état endémique dans un groupe social" ("La notion de dépense," *Oeuvres complètes* [Paris: Gallimard, 1970], 1:311).]

21. See Georges Bataille, "L'Economie à la mesure de l'univers," in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), 7:7–16. Bataille writes that "essentially wealth is energy: energy is the base and the end of production. . . . Even our inert products—a chair, a plate, a building—respond to the necessities of a dynamic system. The use of my muscular energy implies a time of repose where I am seated on a chair: the chair aids me in managing the energy that I expend now in writing" (9). ["Essentiellement la richesse est énergie: l'énergie est la base et la fin de production. . . . Même nos produits inertes—une chaise, une assiette, un immeuble—répondent aux nécessités d'un système dynamique. L'emploi de mon énergie musculaire implique un temps de repos où je suis assis sur une chaise: la chaise m'aide à ménager l'énergie que je dépense maintenant en écrivant."] For an analysis that relates the Bataillean notion of general economy to the Deleuze-Guattarian concept of schizoanalysis, see Eugene Holland, "From Schizophrenia to Social Control," in *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy, and Culture,* ed. Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

22. Cited in Plotnitsky, *Reconfigurations,* 20.

23. Georges Bataille, "The Psychological Structure of Fascism," in *Visions of Excess,* 137. ["*homogénéité* signifie . . . commensurabilité des éléments et conscience de cette commensurabilité" ("La structure psychologique du fascisme," *Oeuvres complètes* [Paris: Gallimard, 1970], 1:340).]

24. Ibid., 140. ["une structure tranchée," 1:343.]

25. Ibid., 142. ["l'ensemble des résultats de la dépense *improductive,*" 1:346.]

26. Ibid., 141 [1:344–45].

27. Ibid., 138. ["La commune mesure, fondement de *l'homogénéité* sociale et de l'activité qui en relève, est l'argent," 1:340.]

28. Bataille, "L'Economie à la mesure de l'univers," 13. ["L'argent . . . n'est qu'une forme d'énergie."]

29. On the ethics of the writing of nothing and its relation to the general economy, see Allan Stoekl's preface to *Yale French Studies* 78: "So perhaps in Bataille there is the necessity of morality and representation, no matter how 'accursed,' along with its impossibility. There is the rigor of the textual procedure, the repetitious writing and betrayal of the sense of the 'nothing' (the 'general writing'), elaborated at the expense of the ethical, and there is, in and through that very writing, the impossibility of maintaining its purity, and thus the consequent, incessant, repositing of the ethical, even the representation of its defeat or sundering (the 'general economy')" (5).

30. By this view, Pierre Bourdieu is the preeminent restrictive economist!

31. On the irreparable as "*capable of not not-being,*" see Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community,* trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 39–40, 89–106.

32. Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum," 165. ["Mais un jour, peut-être, le siècle sera deleuzien" (885).]

33. For Deleuze's reading of this statement, see his interview with Robert Maggiori in *Pourparlers* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1990), 121–22; *Negotiations,* 88–89. See also my discussion of this in chapter 5.

34. Jean-Maurice Monnoyer, *Le Peintre et son démon: Entretiens avec Pierre Klossowski* (Paris: Flammarion, 1985), 181. ["Bataille était une présence si puissante qu'on ne peut nier qu'il eut sur moi, de prime abord, un extraordinaire ascendant."]

35. Georges Bataille, "Hors des limites," *Critique* 81 (February 1954): 104. ["il est vain de chercher un précédent"; "un monstre séduisant"; "la pensée sortant des limites."]

36. Pierre Klossowski, "Le Corps du néant: L'Expérience de la mort de Dieu chez Nietzsche et la nostalgie d'une expérience authentique chez Georges Bataille," in *Sade mon prochain* (Paris: Seuil, 1947), 182. For a helpful history of French writings on Sade that gives an excellent overview of the essays by Bataille and Klossowski discussed here, see Carolyn J. Dean, *The Self and Its Pleasures: Bataille, Lacan, and the History of the Decentered Subject* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 170–78, 183–88.

37. Translated as "The Philosopher-Villain," in *Sade My Neighbor,* trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991).

38. Jane Gallop, *Intersections: A Reading of Sade with Bataille, Blanchot, and Klossowski* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), 90–91.

39. It should be noted that Klossowski remarks on the way Bataille came around to *his* way of seeing, how he, Klossowski, mitigated Bataille's "violent anticlericism." See Monnoyer, *Le Peintre et son démon,* 177.

40. Klossowski, "Le Corps du néant," 180. ["L'Eglise de la Mort de Dieu aliène précisément ce qui donne vie au Corps mystique: le sacrifice volontaire de la tête qui constitue la Résurrection du corps tout entier."]

41. Ibid., 178. ["Son *acéphalité* n'exprime en somme que le malaise d'une culpabilité que la conscience s'est aliénée en plongeant la foi dans le sommeil."]

42. Aimé Patri, "Notre frère damné," *L'Arche* 26 (June 1947): 152–57. I am indebted to Jane Gallop's *Intersections* for this reference. She provides a detailed analysis of Patri's argument as well as Klossowski's response to it in a footnote in one of his subsequent essays on Sade, "De l'opportunité à étudier l'oeuvre du Marquis de Sade," *Cahiers du sud* 285 (1947): 717.

43. Proselytizing might be the more operative term. It is interesting to note that Klossowski more than once refers to Bataille's proselytizing tendencies. See "Le Corps du néant," 166, and the interview in Monnoyer, *Le Peintre et son démon,* 180.

44. Georges Bataille, "Le Secret de Sade," *Critique* 15/16 (August-September 1947): 147–60, and continued in *Critique* 17 (October 1947): 304–12. This has been reprinted, with some revision, in the chapter on Sade in *Literature and Evil,* trans. Alastair Hamilton (New York: Urizen Books, 1973), 83–107. [*La Littérature et le mal* (Paris: Gallimard, 1957), 78–96.]

45. Bataille, *Literature and Evil,* 92. ["Klossowski a donné un portrait de l'auteur de *Justine* une image un peu construite"; "c'est en un sens très hégélien, mais sans la rigeur de Hegel"; "un peu vite, Klossowski tire une conclusion d'un brilliant passage de la *Philosophie dans le boudoir*" (*La Littérature et le mal,* 85–86).]

46. Ibid., 93, footnote on 107. ["Klossowski dit très justement"; "l'âme romantique . . . n'est plus qu'un état nostalgique de la foi"; "Je ne suis pas Klossowski dans cette réserve," 86–87.] Just after this, Bataille twice refers to Klossowski's Christianity in a notably pejorative tone. After making a reference to God, Bataille notes parenthetically that "Klos-

sowski, as a Christian, is the first to draw the comparison" (93). ["un chrétien, Klossowski, propose le premier la comparaison" (87).] He later writes, "As the Christian Klossowski says, [Sade's] endless novels are more like prayer books than books of entertainment" (94). ["Comme le dit le chrétien Klossowski, ses interminables romans, plutôt qu'aux livres qui nous amusent, ressemblent aux livres de dévotion" (88).]

47. Monnoyer, *Le Peintre et son démon,* 175, 180. ["Nul n'était, finalement, plus anticommuniste que Bataille"; "Au pire sense, Bataille réalisait les pronostics: il était resté un anarchiste qui retombait dans l'élément capitaliste, tandis que le marxisme en face de lui se résumait par l'impuissance."] Such a comment is in keeping with Geoff Waite's reading of Nietzsche as a thinker similarly positioned outside of communism. For a critique of Nietzsche's legacy that is as original as Klossowski's symptomatic reading, see his *Nietzsche's Corps/e: Aesthetics, Politics, Prophecy, or, the Spectacular Technoculture of Everyday Life* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996). See especially 265–75 for a discussion of Klossowski's writings on Nietzsche.

For an interesting critique of Bataille's apolitical preoccupation with Parisian street life at a moment (1941) when Jews were being rounded up in the streets, see Susan Rubin Sulieman, "Bataille in the Street: The Search for Virility in the 1930s," in *Bataille: Writing the Sacred,* ed. Carolyn Bailey Gill (New York: Routledge, 1995), 25–45.

48. Pierre Klossowski, "La Messe de Georges Bataille," in *Un si funeste désir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1963).

49. Pierre Klossowski, "A propos du simulacre dans la communication de Georges Bataille," *Critique* 195/196 (August-September 1963): 742–50.

50. Monnoyer, *Le Peintre et son démon,* 180.

51. For the definitive history of this period, see Denis Hollier, ed., *The College of Sociology, 1937–1939,* trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

52. Ilya Prigogene and Isabelle Stengers, *Order Out of Chaos: Man's New Dialogue with Nature* (Boulder, Colo.: Shambhala, 1984), 12.

Seven Conclusion

1. In *Klossowski: L'Homme aux simulacres* (Paris: Navarin, 1986), Anne-Marie Lugan-Dardigna cites a conversation with Klossowski where he acknowledges that Lacan served as a model for Ygdrasil (93, n. 20).

2. Pierre Klossowski, *Les Lois de l'hospitalité* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), 303. ["La pratique de l'hospitalité, telle que vous la concevez ne saurait être unilatérale. Comme toute hospitalité, celle-là aussi, et particulièrement celle-là, exige la réciprocité absolue pour être viable."]

3. See especially Bataille's laudatory review of Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes tropiques:* "Un Livre humain, un grand livre," in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), 12:381–94.

4. Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Introduction," in *Works of Marcel Mauss,* trans. Felicity Baker (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), 45.

5. See Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies,* trans. W. D. Halls (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990).

6. For more on women as the object of gift exchange, see Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). See especially chapter 6, "Female Property" (93–108), which discusses the logics of etiquette books and wedding gifts.

7. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship,* trans. James Harle Bell, John Richard von Sturmer, and Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 55.

8. Lévi-Strauss, "Introduction," 58–59.

9. Pierre Bourdieu, selections from *The Logic of Practice,* in *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity,* ed. Alan D. Schrift (New York: Routledge, 1997), 197–98.

10. Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier: A Tale of Passion* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), 7.

11. Although his work is proximate to that of Blanchot (and sometimes to Deleuze and Klossowski), Derrida for the most part does not engage in the mode of encomium at issue here. An exception is perhaps Derrida's writing on Blanchot, though, as noted in the introduction, I would classify this as an entirely different form of exegetical writing, one marked by restraint and not excess. Such a restraint is best illustrated by Blanchot's own writing on Derrida (as well as on Levinas and Jabès). See, for example, Blanchot's essay "Thanks (Be Given) to Jacques Derrida," in *The Blanchot Reader,* ed. Mike Holland (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 317–23, where Derrida's name is only mentioned in the title and once again (parenthetically) in the final lines. It is interesting to note, especially with respect to Lévi-Strauss's likening of Mauss to Moses, that Blanchot's ostensible piece on Derrida is all about Moses. To add one more link to the chain, Derrida's *Archive Fever,* trans. Eric Prenowitz

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), has as one of its central focal points the juxtaposition of Freud and Moses.

12. Jacques Derrida, "The Time of the King," in *Given Time 1: Counterfeit Money,* trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), reprinted in Schrift, *The Logic of the Gift,* 138.

13. Ibid., 140.

14. In addition to "The Time of the King," Derrida emphasizes the singularity and dissymetry of death as a nonreciprocal gift in *The Gift of Death,* trans. David Wills (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995) (see especially p. 41). It is particularly interesting to note the way he discusses the nonreciprocity of friendship as a "logic of the gift" in *The Politics of Friendship:* "A logic of the gift thus withholds friendship from its philosophical interpretation. Imparting to it a new twist, at once both gentle and violent, this logic reorientates friendship, deflecting it towards what it should have been—what it immemorially will have been. This logic calls friendship back to non-reciprocity, to dissymmetry or to disproportion, to the impossibility of a return to offered or received hospitality; in short, it calls friendship back to the irreducible precedence of the other" (63). While Derrida employs gift and hospitality almost interchangeably here, I think the "logic of the gift" might be more aptly applied to reciprocal friendship, and a "logic of hospitality" to what is nonreciprocal and strange in the friend.

15. For a very different and more ironic conception of hospitality as it applies to the "hospitality" of the French toward North Africans, see Tahar Ben Jelloun, *Hospitalité française* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1984).

16. Moishe Black, "Camus's 'L'Hôte' as a Ritual of Hospitality," *Nottingham French Studies* 28 (Spring 1989): 49.

17. Edmond Jabès, *Le Livre de l'hospitalité* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 84. Jabès's magnificent book, which defies classification by genre, stages in many instances a dialogue between unnamed interlocutors, such as in the following excerpt where one interlocutor distinguishes between gift and hospitality: "There is no such gift that is not, above all, a gift of reciprocity. Hospitality is not a gift. . . . Before being claimed, it is, already, accorded" (76).

18. Ibid., 85.

19. Lévi-Strauss, *Elementary Structures of Kinship,* 482.

20. See Ben Jelloun, *Hospitalité française,* especially chapter 1, "Les Lois de l'hospitalité," 13–24, which begins with the following lines:

"Hospitality has its laws. They are not written but are part of a civilization's values and principles. Sometimes they imply rights, sometimes duties" (13).

21. Jacques Derrida, *De l'hospitalité: Anne Dufourmantelle invite Jacques Derrida à répondre* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1997), 29.

22. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Theorem,* trans. Stuart Hood (London: Quartet Books, 1992).

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Index

absence and presence, 54, 56. *See also* work, absence of
acéphale, 123–25, 128
Acker, Kathy, 37
acrobat, 27–30, 33–34
affirmation, 28, 30, 33–36, 49, 57, 108
Agamben, Giorgio, 68–69, 199 n. 31
Althusser, Louis, 62–63, 82–83, 171–72 n. 4, 173–74 n. 15
Aristotle, 39–41, 44, 56–59
Aron, Raymond, 12
Artaud, Antonin, 53, 64, 172 n. 8
attraction and repulsion, 56
Auster, Paul, 153 n. 35

Balthus, 187 n. 16
Barthes, Roland, 48–49
Bataille, Georges, 2, 25, 54, 144 n. 11; and Blanchot, 12–13, 18–38, 41, 45, 48–49, 53, 59, 105, 145 n. 1, 150 n. 21, 151 n. 26, 154 n. 39, 155 n. 41, 156 n. 46, 157–58 n. 54, 197–98 nn. 19, 21, 201 n. 47; and Deleuze, 2, 189 n. 30; and Foucault, 15, 145 n. 23; and Klossowski, 3–4, 7, 111–29, 132, 189 n. 30; and Leiris, 157–58 nn. 54, 55. Works: "Ce monde où nous mourons, 27–30; *L'Expérience intérieure,* 31–33; "Hors des limites," 123, 127; "Le Secret de Sade," 125; "Silence et littérature," 25–27
Baudrillard, Jean, 183 n. 61
becoming, 102–7, 191 n. 39
Bellour, Raymond, 65
Ben Jelloun, Tahar, 139–40, 203–4 nn. 15, 20
Benjamin, Walter, 5, 74, 98
Bensmaïa, Reda, 48–49, 51–52
Bident, Christophe, 165 n. 26
biography, 181 n. 48, 191 n. 40
Black, Moishe, 137–38
Blanchot, Maurice, 2, 8, 13, 25, 82, 147–48 nn. 8, 9, 151 n. 24, 165–66 n. 28, 166 nn. 30, 31, 175 n. 26; and Bataille (*see under* Bataille); and Derrida, 3, 202–3 n. 11; and des Forêts, 147 n. 8; and Foucault, 6, 13, 38, 45–61, 151 n. 25; and Leiris, 35–36. Works: "L'Affirmation et la passion de la pensée négative," 30, 145–46 n. 3; *L'Amitié,* 37, 41, 53; *Au moment voulu,* 47–48; *La Communauté inavouable,* 41–42, 52–53, 59; *Le Dernier Homme,* 27–30; "Le Jeu de la pensée," 28, 30, 33; *Michel Foucault tel que je l'imagine,* 45–47, 58–59; "La Parole vaine," 19–20, 24, 35
body, 85–86, 91, 105, 114; of Jew, 85, 97–98, 104, 107; and mind, 8; sick, 85, 89, 103–6, 109; and soul, 86, 89, 96–97, 103–9; of woman, 85, 88, 96, 104, 107
Boutang, Yann Moulier, 82–83
breath, 27, 33

breaths, pure, 89, 99–100, 110, 113–14, 119
Bruns, Gerald L., 154 n. 40

Caillois, Roger, 3–5
Camus, Albert, 137–38
Canguilhem, Georges, 8–9
Carroll, Lewis, 79
Catholic mysticism, 144 n. 11
chaos theory, 128–29
chatter, 13, 18, 20–36, 72, 111, 121, 149–50 nn. 20–21
Christianity, 200–201 n. 46
College of Sociology, 3–7, 128, 143 n. 7
communication, 9, 36, 73, 149–50 n. 21, 164 n. 23
communism, 141, 201 n. 47
community, 35, 42, 45, 49, 141, 163 n. 20; phantom, 16
companion, 55–56, 169 n. 47
conceptual personae, 55
confession, 35–36
content. *See under* form
contradiction, 42–46, 57, 77, 152 n. 30; money as locus of, 121; noncontradiction, 54. *See also* disjunction; opposition
convalescence, 101–2, 189–90 n. 31
conversation, 19, 31–33, 70, 79
critical writing, 7, 9, 15, 18–19, 34, 72, 91
critique, 70, 79, 168 n. 43; absence of, 112; tyranny of, 24
currency, living, 113–20

danger, 75–76, 80, 179 n. 39
De Man, Paul, 173 n. 14
De Vries, Hent, 165 n. 26
Dean, Carolyn J., 199 n. 36
death, 14, 20, 41, 44, 48, 58–61, 65–66, 158 n. 55, 165 n. 26, 173–74 nn. 15, 16, 203 n. 14
Deleuze, 2, 25, 151 n. 25; and Bataille, 2, 189 n. 30; footnote in "Theatrum Philosophicum," 119, 122, 126; and Foucault, 1, 12, 22, 38, 48, 59, 64–84, 105, 122, 136, 177–79 nn. 34, 35, 37, 38, 40; and Guattari, 54–55, 74–75, 85, 163–64 n. 23, 193 n. 48; and Klossowski, 15, 84–111, 191–92 nn. 40, 44. Works: *Dialogues,* 73, 163–64 n. 23, 189 n. 30; *Différence et répétition,* 77–78, 81; *Foucault,* 66–68; "Klossowski ou les corps-langage," 85, 107
delirium, 36, 52; of praise, 122, 127
Derrida, Jacques, 3, 11, 44, 48, 58, 81, 97–98, 136–37, 145 n. 1, 151 n. 25, 163 n. 19, 170 n. 55; and Blanchot, 3, 202–3 n. 11; and Foucault, 183 n. 63. Work: *Politiques de l'amitié,* 37–38, 50–51, 56–60
Des Forêts, Louis-René, 146–48 nn. 8, 9. Work: *Le Bavard,* 12–13, 18–27, 35–36
Descombes, Vincent, 15
désoeuvrement, 8, 42–43, 82, 148 n. 16, 162 n. 16, 183–84 n. 64
desubjectification, 4, 7
dialectic, 7, 19, 32–34, 43, 86, 91, 99, 108, 111, 130, 146 n. 5, 151 n. 25
dialogue, 19, 31–33, 70, 79
dice, 28, 30, 33–34
difference, 78, 80
Diogenes Laertes, 58–59, 163 n. 21
disembodiment, 35, 74–75
disjunction, 23, 66, 76, 86–88, 94, 103–4, 107–9
disjunctive synthesis, 88, 108–10, 130, 193 n. 48
dissipative structure, 128–29
dizziness, 30, 42–43, 85, 101
double, 25, 34, 54, 63–68, 71–73, 81, 175 n. 21
Durham, Scott, 16, 196 n. 11

economy, 112–22, 197–98 n. 19; general and restricted, 120–22, 124, 127–29, 199 n. 20; gift, 41, 133–35
El Greco, 74
encomium: delirious, 72; extreme, 29–33, 36, 66, 79. *See also* laudatory essay; praise
energy, 10, 54, 97, 103, 121, 140, 198 n. 21
essay. *See* laudatory essay
ethics, 35
event, 66, 70, 75–79
Ewald, François, 75–76
excess, 40, 121
exchange, 113–20; between men, 107; economies of, 76, 91–92
exegesis, 7, 79, 81, 125, 132–33
expenditure, 122–24, 129; imbalanced, 127
eyes, 72–73, 76–77

failure, 173 n. 14
Felman, Shoshana, 183 n. 63
feminism, 92–93, 143–44 n. 11, 187 n. 14
Fenves, Peter, 23, 149 n. 20
finitude, 44, 163 n. 19
footnote, 119–20, 126
force, 114, 191 n. 40; active and reactive, 105–7
Ford, Ford Madox, 135
form, 9–10, 131, 139–40; and content, 11–12, 20–21, 56–57, 65, 71–72, 112, 134, 148 n. 14
Foucault, Michel, 2, 15, 25, 47, 64, 86, 150 n. 23, 176 n. 28, 181 n. 48; and Bataille, 15, 145 n. 23; and Blanchot, 6, 13, 38, 45–61, 151 n. 25; and Deleuze (*see under* Deleuze); and Derrida, 183 n. 63; and Klossowski, 84, 182 n. 59; and Jacques Martin, 62. Works: *L'Archéologie du savoir,* 65; "Ariane s'est pendue," 78; "La Folie, l'absence d'oeuvre," 63; *Naissance de la clinique,* 63–65, 67; "La Pensée du dehors," 13, 46, 168 n. 43; *Raymond Roussel,* 63–67, 174 n. 20; "Technologies of the Self," 52–53; "Theatrum Philosophicum," 78–80, 85, 119, 122, 126
freedom, 48
friendship, 13–14, 35, 37–61, 72, 77, 155 n. 41, 161 n. 14, 163 n. 19, 167 n. 39, 169–70 n. 52, 203 n. 14
future anterior, 57–58, 76

Gallop, Jane, 97, 123–24
gambler, 28, 153 n. 34
game, 21; of thought, 25–35
Genette, Gérard, 11
genre, 11
gesture, 14, 29, 67–81, 105, 192 n. 41
gift, 16, 92, 132–33, 136–37, 202 n. 6; of death, 59, 170 n. 55, 203 n. 14
Glauser, Alfred, 159–60 n. 5
God, 108–9, 123–25, 144 n. 11
Guattari, Félix. *See under* Deleuze
guest and host, 88–89, 131, 137–40

Hamann, Johan-Georg, 99
Hardt, Michael, 191–92 n. 40
hatred, 39–43
haunting, 77
health, 9. *See also* sickness
Hegel, G.W.F., 146 n. 5, 154 n. 40
Heidegger, Martin, 149 n. 20
heterogeneity and homogeneity, 120–21
heterosexuality, 104, 110
Hill, Leslie, 157 n. 53
historical context, 5–6
Holland, Eugene, 198 n. 21
Hollier, Denis, 4, 65, 174 n. 16
homoerotics, 10–11, 161 n. 13, 186–87 n. 13
homogeneity, 120–21

homophobia, 176 n. 28
homosexuality, 181 n. 48
hospitality, 16, 130–41, 203–4 nn. 14, 15, 17, 20; absolute, 131–32, 139–40
host, 107; and guest, 88–89, 131, 137–40
Hunt, Lynn, 93–94, 187 n. 17

identity, breakdown of, 15, 85–86, 89, 91, 97, 107, 109, 111, 122, 126, 138, 140–41. *See also* self: dissolution of
idle talk, 8. *See also* chatter
imbalance, 19, 50, 84, 121, 127, 131, 134
impersonal, 4, 13–14, 38, 58–63, 69, 72, 74, 139, 184 n. 65, 191 n. 40; and personal, 11, 35, 45–52, 67–70, 77, 81, 84, 111, 147 n. 8, 159 n. 5
impurity and purity, 89, 168 n. 43
incorporeal, 35, 74–75
intensity, 71, 108–13

Jabès, Edmond, 3, 138–39, 203 n. 17
Jay, Martin, 13
Jew, 5, 201 n. 47; body of, 85, 97–98
Jewish children, 100–101, 115
joy, 102–3

Kafka, Franz, 74
Kant, Immanuel, 108–9
Kojève, Alexandre, 5
Klossowski, Pierre, 2, 49, 54, 79–80, 98, 127–28, 144 n. 11, 187 nn. 14, 16, 193 n. 46; and Bataille, 3–4, 7, 111–29, 132, 189 n. 30; and Deleuze, 15, 84–111, 191–92 nn. 40, 44; and Foucault, 84, 182 n. 59. Works: *Le Baphomet,* 182 n. 59, 194 n. 52; "Le Corps du néant," 123–25; "Digression à partir d'un portrait apocryphe," 85–86; *Les Lois de l'hospitalité,* 86–89, 93, 130–31; *La Monnaie vivante,* 113–20, 186 n. 12, 195 n. 9; *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux,* 9, 84, 86, 99, 101–2, 105–6; *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes,* 95–101, 114–15, 193–94 n. 50; "Roberte et Gulliver, " 105

Lacan, Jacques, 37, 131, 151 n. 25
lack, 49, 51
language, 21, 65–66, 75, 90, 107
laudatory essay, 22, 61, 70–71, 91, 118–21, 130, 168 n. 43, 182 n. 59; breakdown of, 122–29; as exemplary, 1–2; as genre, 11, 49, 73, 86
laughter, 67, 73, 75–77
Leiris, Michel, 3, 35–36, 79, 157–58 nn. 54, 55
Levinas, Emmanuel, 3, 169 n. 47
Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 132–35, 139
Libertson, Joseph, 145–46 n. 3
limit-experience, 30, 154 n. 39, 176 n. 28
limits, 54, 127
love, 51
lucidity, voluptuous, 104
Lyotard, Jean-François, 115–16, 151 n. 25, 195 n. 9

Macherey, Pierre, 51, 174–75 n. 20
madness, 8, 25, 63–65, 78, 81–83, 183–84 nn. 63, 64
Marks, John, 182 n. 55
marriage, 88, 93–95, 133
Martin, Jacques, 8, 62–63, 82–83, 171–74 nn. 4, 8, 15
Marx, Karl, 197 n. 15
materiality, 105. *See also* energy
Mauss, Marcel, 132–36
Mehlman, Jeffrey, 98–99
Miller, James, 46–47, 68, 176 n. 28, 181 n. 48
mise-en-abîme, 66–68, 71, 73, 77, 79, 81
mode, 11
modernism, 160 n. 5

money, 197 n. 15; and living currency, 113–20
Montaigne, Michel de, 43–44, 51, 57–58; and Etienne de la Boétie, 38–40, 43, 45, 48, 59, 159–60 n. 5. Work: "De l'amitié," 39–42
mourning, 67

name, 114–15; proper, 69
Nancy, Jean-Luc, 8, 42, 151 n. 25
Nazis, 99–101
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 9–10, 53, 56, 85, 89, 99–109, 126, 191 n. 40, 196 n. 11, 201 n. 47
nonrelation, 67, 175 n. 26
Norberg, Kathryn, 95
normal, 102; *vs.* pathological, 9–10
North Africa, 137–38
nothingness, 25–26, 53, 64, 72, 97, 199 n. 29

object, 113–19. *See also* subject and object
Oedipus, 108–9
opposition, 44, 71, 88, 106, 109, 193–94 n. 50. *See also* contradiction; disjunction
oppositional extremes, 86, 107, 109

pain, 190 n. 34
paradox, 26, 42
Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 140
Patri, Aimé, 125
Pepper, Thomas, 169 n. 43
personal, 6, 37, 68, 71, 75, 85, 101, 104. *See also under* impersonal
phantasm, 49, 83, 113–18, 122
philosophy: materialist, 94–96; Scholastic, 87, 90–91
place, suspension of, 16
Pliny, 52–53
pornography, in France, 93–94
potlatch, 133–34
praise, 7, 29, 58; delirious, 81
presence, 68, 71; and absence, 54, 56
Prigogene, Ilya, 128–29
Protestant, 98–100
provocation and revocation, 107, 110
pulsions, 113–21, 127, 129, 191 n. 40
punctuation, 59–60
purity and impurity, 89, 168 n. 43

queer, 143–44 n. 11, 161 n. 13

Rabaté, Dominique, 147 n. 8
reading, 42, 44–45, 71
Real, 25, 115, 151 n. 25
reciprocity, 35, 131–40, 203 n. 14
repetition, 66, 78, 80, 83, 122, 180 n. 45
repulsion and attraction, 56
reserve, 31, 48, 52–53, 60, 122
restraint, 202 n. 11. *See also* reserve
revocation, 193 n. 46; and provocation, 107, 110
Revolution, French, 93–95, 187 n. 17
risk, 28, 30
Roberte (character in Klossowski, *Les Lois de l'hospitalité*), 85–100, 104–10, 113
Roussel, Raymond, 63–65, 173–75 nn. 15, 20, 21
Rubin, Gayle, 92–93, 187 n. 15

Sade, Marquis de, 12, 53, 79, 87, 94, 123–27, 199 n. 36
Sartre, Jean-Paul, 2, 5, 20, 147–48 n. 9
Scarry, Elaine, 190 n. 34
schizoanalysis, 198 n. 21
Schmitt, Karl, 56, 169 n. 48, 170 n. 52
Second World War, 5, 6, 93, 96
Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky, 186–87 n. 13
self: care of, 51–52; dissolution of, 52, 54, 192 n. 44
seriousness, 34, 57, 71–72
sex, 150 n. 23

sickness, 9–10, 86, 101–7, 189–90 n. 31
silence, 8, 12, 44–45, 49–50, 53, 65–66, 99, 152 n. 30; in Bataille and Blanchot, 18–36, 149–51 nn. 21, 23, 24; pure and impure, 89–91, 107
simulacrum, 86, 97–98, 112–18, 127, 147–48 n. 9, 196 n. 11
singularity, 31, 40, 44–45, 54, 60–61, 70, 78–79, 105, 115, 117, 129, 134, 170 n. 55, 203 n. 14
Smock, Ann, 189–90 n. 31
solecism, 108, 193–94 n. 50
solitude, 29
speech, 23–24, 30, 35–36, 76, 90, 107, 111, 149–50 n. 21, 153 n. 34, 168 n. 43
spirit. *See* breaths, pure
Stengers, Isabelle, 128–29
Stoekl, Allan, 15, 199 n. 29
stranger, 107, 138–40
style, 69–70
subject and object, 7, 111, 114–18, 127, 195 n. 9
subjectivation, 66, 70
subjectivity, 150 n. 21; breakdown of, 16, 20, 30, 54. *See also* identity, breakdown of
substance, simple and composite, 90–91, 119
suffering, 101–3
Sulieman, Susan Rubin, 201 n. 47
Surrealism, 5

temporality, 60
theater, 54, 70, 78, 109, 182 n. 55, 193–94 n. 50
thought, 10–11, 63, 66, 77, 86, 104–6, 110, 154 n. 39; and bodies, 89–91; as footnote, 119; game of, 25–35; general economy of, 122; as material energy, 54, 85, 140; of the other, 37, 41, 103, 109, 131–32; from outside, 53–55, 79; as singularity, 70; and suffering, 102–3; as theater, 78–79, 168 n. 43, 182 n. 55
time, suspension of, 16
tone, 53, 58, 79, 105–6, 109, 122
transgression, 157–58 nn. 52, 54, 189 n. 30; sexual, 95–97
truth, 147–48 n. 9; and confession, 24; and lying, 21–24

unworking. *See désoeuvrement*

vertigo, 30, 42–43, 85, 101
vicious circle, 64, 129
Virno, Paolo, 169–70 n. 52
visibility, 65–66, 76, 177 n. 35
visible and invisible, 13
voice, 72–73, 76–77, 178 n. 36

Waite, Geoff, 201 n. 47
Wall, Thomas Carl, 166 n. 31
Wells, H. G., 26
witness, bearing, 30–31, 58
women, 133; exchange of, 92, 202 n. 6; and friendship, 39, 159 n. 4; role of, 92–96
words, 27, 118–19, 151 n. 24
work, absence of, 8, 22, 34, 61–64, 69, 72, 78, 81–83, 111, 118, 129, 143 n. 7, 172 n. 4, 175 n. 26, 183–84 nn. 64, 65
writing, 44. *See also* critical writing